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SEVEN SECTIONS THE BEST VALUE SATURDAY PAPER

Return of the witches




page 17

WEEKEND




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Lad of Lads

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THE TIMES 50P

No. 66,215

SATURDAY MAY 30 1998

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Labour U-turn lets schools opt out

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

LABOUR is planning to complete the process of allowing schools to opt out of local authority control that it fought against bitterly when in opposition.

The transformation in the running of state schools was announced by ministers yesterday in a move seen as completing the Conservative goal of ending town hall control of education.

Every head teacher will be handed the financial freedom previously enjoyed by the 1,100 schools

that opted for the Tories' flagship policy of grant-maintained status. From next April, all 24,000 state schools will have the right to spend their entire budgets as they see fit. Stephen Byers, the School Standards Minister, said yesterday.

The decision removes local authority control over services worth up to £600 million. If schools want to continue to use the authority to run their payroll, library or meal services, they will have to "opt in".

Mr Byers, who unveiled the package at the annual conference of the National Association of Head Teachers, in Eastbourne, acknowl-

edged that the scheme was "not dissimilar" to opting out.

Labour fought a series of battles against opting out under the Tory Government and is in the process of abolishing grant-maintained status. Conservatives seized on the plans for a huge reduction in the role of local authorities as a U-turn.

Gillian Shephard, the former Education Secretary, said: "They have effectively adopted Conservative plans to give all schools more autonomy."

Councillors will be restricted to tightly defined areas involving raising standards and their bud-

gets will be capped if ministers consider that they are over-spending on administration.

Council leaders put a brave face on the changes but privately many were furious. Dave Wilcox, vice-chairman of the Local Government Association's education committee, said he regretted that councils were being relegated to the role of Whitehall agents.

Representatives of the grant-maintained sector were jubilant, however. Pauline Latham, who chairs the Grant-Maintained Advisory Committee, said: "This is a very positive step. Although we

regret that grant-maintained status will go, this is bringing the benefits to every school."

The proposals, which are subject to consultation until July, would secure most of the funding enjoyed by grant-maintained schools. Although they will have to co-operate with local authorities on admissions and include representatives on their governing bodies, only £45 a pupil for staff training will be transferred from their budgets.

Mr Byers told delegates: "Local authorities, when they work well, can add value to a school, but when they perform badly they become

part of the problem. The reality when it comes to raising standards is that it is what happens in individual schools and classrooms that will determine the quality of education available." Many schools had not wanted to opt out, Mr Byers said. But they did want to control their own budgets.

David Hart, general secretary of the head teachers' association, said the change could amount to a revolution in the way schools were run. "It is as close as the Government can conceivably get to the grant-maintained system, bearing in mind that local authorities have a

clear role in the Bill now before Parliament." Mr Hart said that up to £600 million would be available to schools to make savings and transfer money to help in raising standards. Head teachers in secondary schools were confident that they could make money for their schools.

Among services to be transferred from local authority control are responsibility for repairs and insurance, and funding for outdoor centres and curriculum advice. Only funding for music is to be ring-fenced in order to safeguard it for at least three years.

IN BRIEF

Pakistan to arm missiles
Pakistan announced yesterday that it would arm its medium-range missiles, capable of hitting most Indian cities, with nuclear warheads and warned Delhi of massive retaliation in event of an attack. Islamabad declared a state of emergency in the face of sanctions. Britain recalled its representative.
Nuclear race, 14, 15
Leading article, page 23

Court drama
Days before the verdict in the Louise Woodward appeal, Elaine Whitfield-Sharp of the defence team has taken the au-pair's place at centre stage. Her taciturnity in court has been eclipsed by her alleged outspokenness outside... Page 5

Goldwater dies
President Clinton lamented the death of Barry Goldwater, founder of the modern conservative movement in the US, calling him "an American original". The former presidential candidate died at 89.
Obituary, page 25

Gazza injured
Paul Gascoigne was taken off with a muscle strain after half-time in the game against Belgium in Casablanca. It was unclear whether the injury was serious enough to threaten his role in the World Cup.
Result, page 33

Baby death surgeons ignored warnings

By IAN MURRAY AND ADRIAN LEE

TWO surgeons who ignored repeated warnings that they were clinically incompetent continued to carry out complicated heart operations at a hospital in Bristol during which 29 babies died, the General Medical Council found yesterday.

A third doctor, the chief executive of the Bristol Royal Infirmary, had the authority to stop them operating but failed to do so, even though he had clear evidence that they were not up to the job.

The decision, coming at the end of the GMC's longest inquiry, was denounced by parents of some of the children who died or were left brain damaged.

The committee investigated 53 cases of which 29 ended in death; four children were left with severe brain damage. It found that three of the babies died during hole-in-the-heart operations carried out by the senior of the two surgeons, James Wisheart, 60, who was medical director of the United Bristol Hospitals Trust.

Another three died during operations by his junior, Jalandar Dhasmana, 48.

The committee found that Dr John Roylance, 67, the chief executive, should have intervened to stop the operation in January 1995 in which an 18-month-old boy, Joshua Loveday, died.

The committee meets again on June 15 to hear evidence in mitigation by the doctors before deciding whether they were guilty of serious professional misconduct. They could then be struck off the medical register, although Mr Wisheart and Dr Roylance have already retired.

Parents of the victims said they were satisfied that the



Kiss from a prince

PRINCE MAURITS, the nephew of Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and fifth in line for the throne, kisses his consumer bride, Marijke van den Broek, yesterday during the country's first royal wedding in 23 years.

The couple had a civil ceremony, which was televised, at the Palace Het Loo in Apeldoorn. Among the 55 fiery-orange silk two piece suit and beige hat, is the daughter of Hans van den Broek, the European Commissioner and a former Dutch Foreign Minister.

The Prince, 30 and the son of Princess Margriet and Pieter van Vollenhoven, works as head of logistics services at Schiphol Airport. The couple met five years ago at Groningen University.

England singled out to lose its tourist board

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE English Tourist Board, which promotes a £20 billion tourism market, is to be abolished because of cutbacks in government spending demanded by the Treasury.

Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, proposed the measure as a contribution to the comprehensive spending review, which is aiming for sweeping changes in Whitehall's priorities. The plan has gone before the Cabinet public spending sub-committee.

The English Tourist Board is at the centre of the battle to persuade British holidaymakers to stay at home rather than spend their vacations abroad. Last year, domestic tourism in England generated £12 billion through overnight stays, £10 billion in day trips, and maintained more than 500,000 jobs.

The Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland tourist boards will remain, although

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Sex drug turns aged tycoon into errant stud

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

A ONCE-IMPOTENT millionaire who ran off with a younger woman after taking a course of the potency drug Viagra is being sued for \$2 million (£1.2 million) in "palimony" by his 63-year-old partner.

Roberta "Bobbi" Burke, is also reported to be considering an action against Pfizer, the multinational pharmaceutical company that makes Viagra. Dominic Barbara, her lawyer, said yesterday: "The makers of Viagra should be liable for something like this. It's like giving a loaded gun to someone who has not been trained to shoot." He also said that Pfizer should give warnings that the pills could be "hazardous to the health of marriages".

Ms Burke had lived with Frank "Sonny" Bernardo, 70, a building company executive from Long Island, for a decade, sharing fine apartments and expensive food and wines. Their sexual life was described as "totally satisfactory for their age" until 1994 when Mr Bernardo became impotent. Mr Barbara said that Ms Burke "accepted this setback and tried to be loving and caring".

This month Mr Bernardo went to see a doctor and obtained a prescription for Viagra. Two days later, the legal papers say, he made love successfully to Ms Burke for the first time in four years.

On May 5, however, Mr Bernardo left their home, taking only his wallet, a light travelling bag, and the Viagra with him. He left Ms Burke a brief note, which said: "Hi Bobbi - Sorry but I am leaving - be back in a few days. Use bank money to move your belongings and my Mercedes for a couple of days. Sorry, but it just isn't working out. Love, Sonny."

He has not yet returned and the New York Post now reports that Mr Bernardo has been sighted in New Jersey, "living with a slightly younger woman". The newspaper quotes Ms Burke's lawyer as saying that his client was also told by Mr Bernardo that "it's time for me to be a stud again". In addition to \$2 million, Ms Burke wants the couple's apartment, valued at \$1 million.

Doctors in Britain can already prescribe Viagra on their own authority but few are willing to do so.



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MONDAY

WORLD CUP

Hodde selects his squad

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PLUS Jane Gordon Why Thirtysomething women need a younger man



TUESDAY Julie Walters on love, life and death

WEDNESDAY

Inter//face X marks the spot - hot tips on the latest electronic games PLUS Crème

THURSDAY

Films Richard Gere stars in Red Corner

Best for Books Reviews by Peter Ackroyd and Cameron Mackintosh

FRIDAY

How sport sells pop

SATURDAY

IN THE FREE GLOSSY MAGAZINE

Richard Ashcroft the man who calls the shots



PLUS It's Garbage metro meets the summer's hottest band

Cook plans curbs on British mercenaries

Private military firms might be regulated by government licence, reports Nicholas Wood

PLANS for legal curbs on mercenaries operating out of Britain are being studied by Robin Cook in the wake of the arms-to-Africa affair.

The Foreign Secretary is examining the possibility of regulating the activities of private military companies such as Sandline International, which helped to restore democracy in Sierra Leone earlier this year.

He is said to want to ensure that if British firms do become involved in overseas conflicts, they will be fighting "on the side of the good guys". One possible option is to require mercenary companies to secure a government licence before taking sides in a conflict.

The disclosure came as Britain urged other countries to lift the United Nations ban on arms sales to the democratically elected government of Sierra Leone and to the Nigerian-led

force that overthrew the military junta. The embargo on supplying weapons to other factions in the country would remain in place.

Labour MPs will see Mr Cook's move to regulate mercenaries as a sign of his determination to regain the political initiative after being badly damaged by the confusion over Sandline's role in Sierra Leone. It will also be taken as evidence of the Foreign Secretary's continuing commitment to his much-derided "ethical" foreign policy. Mr Cook's intervention has been partly prompted by the South African Government's decision to curb the activities of mercenaries based in

its territory. Well-placed Foreign Office sources say that the danger is that the more reputable elements in the murky world of South African mercenaries will flee to London to escape Nelson Mandela's squeeze.

One senior Whitehall source said: "This is about making sure that companies that are sound and doing important work can continue to do so without being undermined by companies operating in shady areas and using shady methods. It is a matter of regulation, not prohibition."

It is understood that Mr Cook has asked his officials to investigate how other countries are responding to the

growth of private military companies and private security companies. The Home Office is also involved in "sensitive discussions" about some form of regulation.

One strong possibility is that the Foreign Secretary may decide to follow the South African example, where a Bill now awaiting presidential assent brings mercenaries under direct government supervision. Before accepting a contract to intervene in an area of conflict, a military company must first obtain a government licence. The assets of firms and individuals who flout this law will be liable to seizure.

Mr Cook's review of the law covering mercenaries will run in parallel to the inquiry by Sir Thomas Legg, a former senior civil servant, into the Foreign Office's handling of the Sandline affair.

School chaplain resigns over porn charges

By Victoria Fletcher and Daniel McGrory



Swindells left Tonbridge School yesterday

THE school chaplain arrested for allegedly supplying child pornography in Germany resigned yesterday as police in Kent were investigating property seized from his home in the grounds of Tonbridge School.

The Rev Andrew Swindells met Martin Hammond, the headmaster of the independent school, yesterday morning and offered to step down. His resignation was accepted and took immediate effect.

Mr Swindells has now left his school accommodation. Police raided his home on Monday in the school grounds after he was arrested at Munich station last weekend for allegedly supplying sexually explicit videos of boys between the ages of 11 and 14. He was detained in a German prison for three days before his £1,200 bail was paid for by the school, which then flew him back to London club class.

Detectives last night would not say what they discovered in his home. However, it is understood that Mr Swindells may face charges in Britain.

The school denies any pressure was put on Mr Swindells to resign after complaints from parents. A school

spokesman said: "His offer was made voluntarily during a private half-hour meeting with the headmaster, and he was not pushed into the decision. We have had very little reaction from parents to the situation."

Resentment is growing among parents at how the authorities at Tonbridge School are handling the controversy. Their indignation concerns a letter sent to every parent from Mr Hammond, which some parents say is only concerned with protecting the reputation of the school, which charges fees of £13,000 a year.

One parent, who has two teenage boys at the school, said: "Families with children at boarding schools everywhere must wonder what the priority of such schools is. Of course they care about the school's name, but maybe they forget the welfare of the boys comes first."

Governors of Tonbridge School insisted last night that they approved the letter. But they admitted it mainly concerned Mr Swindells' future.

More prisoners to be allowed television in cells

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

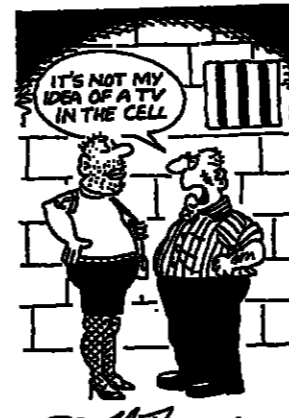
THE Government is to announce an extension in the number of jails in which prisoners can have televisions in their cells.

Thousands more inmates in the 125 prisons in England and Wales will be allowed televisions as part of the earned privileges scheme that is designed to improve behaviour.

MPs will be informed next week that Home Office ministers have backed a plan for senior officials in the Prison Service to equip jails with tens of thousands of sets. The proposal marks the culmination of a long-running Whitehall battle that won the support of senior figures in the judiciary, Prison Service and prisons inspectorate but was resolutely opposed by Michael Howard, the former Conservative Home Secretary.

Under the proposal, inmates would rent their sets, having qualified for the privilege as a result of hard work and good behaviour. But inmates will not be expected to purchase a licence because prisons have Crown immunity and do not need one.

About 2,000 prisoners in about 20 jails have televisions in their cells at present. Four years ago 130 inmates at Strangeways jail in Manchester paid a £10 deposit plus £3 a week, while in Garth jail near Preston inmates pay 40p a week to receive programmes



but are not expected to pay for sets

The Prison Service believes that extending the privilege will act as an incentive for inmates to be well behaved and provide an opportunity for communication between senior staff and prisoners.

Richard Tilt, Director-General of the Prison Service, fully supports the move. Last year he defended in-cell television against those who argued that it showed the service was soft on prisoners.

He said: "These days TV is just part of life. I don't think it is a luxury. It is like having a toothbrush." Prisoners would have to earn the right to have televisions and that bad behaviour could result in sets being removed from a cell or

an inmate transferred to another part of the jail. "It helps to keep them in contact with the real world. It breaks down isolation. Each prisoner has to get back into the real life and TV can help them to do that."

Mr Tilt also saw benefits for the atmosphere in jails, where the population was 65,448 yesterday. "It undoubtedly reduces tension of inmates who had to spend a lot of time in their cells," he said.

Many penal reformers favour the wider use of in-cell television as a means of easing tension in jails. It was supported by General Sir John Learmont, who carried out an inquiry into security after escapes from Whitemoor and Parkhurst prisons, and is backed by Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, senior governors in the service and Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls.

Sir John recommended televisions as a way of controlling inmates by allowing staff to address prisoners by closed-circuit television and avoiding "potentially explosive situations".

The Prison Service is demanding that the height of docks to be increased to deter defendants from jumping into the court and fleeing after publishing figures showing that half of all escapes from custody were in court rooms.

High-tech jail finds the key

By Richard Ford

THE first high-tech jail in Britain is to return to more traditional methods by bringing back keys to help staff to move around the prison.

The embarrassing disclosure that "old technology" is making a comeback at Parc jail comes after the discovery that a centrally controlled system of opening gates and the use of swipe cards at the jail resulted in long delays for prison officers and visitors.

The Prison Service has also imposed a £50,000 fine on Securicor Custodial Services, the firm running the jail, for its failure to inform the service

of an act of indiscipline at Parc three months ago.

Discussions are currently taking place over whether further fines will be imposed on the private sector firm for its failures in running the 800-inmate jail near Bridgend in South Wales.

Parc, hailed as the first high-tech jail which allowed prisoners to use swipe cards and used the advanced technology automatically to open cell doors and gates, has been hit by a series of troubles since it opened last November.

Stephen Shaw, director of the Prison Reform Trust, said:

"It has been a shambles. The plans they are now putting in place will, over time, improve the situation. But by any standards this has been a difficult six months."

Racial violence broke out between black prisoners from London and the "Rhonda Skins", a gang from the South Wales valleys, a swastika was daubed on the wall of the segregation unit and one wing was closed for redecoration after racist graffiti were allegedly found on walls.

Staffing levels at the jail are being increased amid concern in Whitehall.

Pay-per-view deal on soccer rejected

By John Goodbody, Sports News Correspondent

THE FA Premier League yesterday refused to be bounced into a pay-per-view television deal, rejecting an offer from BSkyB worth £10 million next season to the elite clubs.

The 20 club chairmen decided that it was "not in the best interests of football as a whole" to accept the proposals. However, discussions with Sky will continue.

The Football League, supporters' organisations, the Professional Footballers' Association, the Conservative Family Campaign and even civic authorities had opposed the proposals, which would have switched four more Premiership matches next season from Saturday to Sunday, with Sky having the option to screen between one and four on pay-per-view. That would cost individuals £9.95 a match.

After an hour's discussion the clubs agreed, without a vote, not to accept the deal.

Ken Bates of Chelsea said he was pleased with the outcome while Brian Richardson of Coventry added that it was a "very positive meeting".

Peter Leaver, the Leeds chief executive, said there was "unanimity on the subject, we want

BBC Radio Five Live has secured a two-year extension to its exclusive broadcasting rights of the Premier League. The station's current deal was due to expire next year and the new agreement, for an undisclosed amount, covers up until the summer of 2001.

to make certain that the whole thing is properly structured". He said that the issue was not a matter of money. "If it had been, it would have been comparatively simple. However, there are wider issues to resolve, issues with our supporters, and we need to talk to people who invest in the game."

BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, the parent company of The Times, has been keen to conclude a deal. Vic Waking, head of sport, said yesterday: "The proposals were never going to be agreed today. There are still too many details to be discussed and Sky shares the Premier League's wish to get it right for all football fans."

Business, page 27

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IN BRIEF

Boy, 13, convicted of rape

A boy of 13 was put on the National Register of Sex Offenders for life yesterday after a jury unanimously convicted him of raping a five-year-old girl.

The boy, who was 12 at the time of the attack in a tree den at a cemetery, sat between his mother and father at Leeds Crown Court. He burst into tears when the guilty verdict was returned. The boy was released on bail to be sentenced later with the victim's 13-year-old uncle, who at the start of the trial admitted indecently assaulting the girl.

Five die in fire

Four children and their father died when fire swept through their flat in Renfrew, Strathclyde. John Lilley, 30, three-year-old twins Michael and Brian, John, nine, and Ann-Louise, five, died after being pulled from the building. Their mother and another daughter were taken to hospital.

When babies die, the parents by telling them that the operation had been successful but that the heart had not been removed, so it would have anyway. This did not help with Dr Bolin's explanation and he began to make excuses about what was happening.

War crime trial

A retired British Rail worker was ordered to stand trial for the alleged murder of four Jews in Belarus in 1942. Anthony Sawoniuk, 77, is alleged to have committed the crimes in German-occupied Dombachevo, Mr Sawoniuk, of Bermondsey, southeast London, denies the charges.

PC dismissed

A constable was thrown out of Cleveland police yesterday after being jailed for ten years for sex attacks on women he dated. John Blott, 33, a former professional footballer, was found guilty at Leeds Crown Court on May 1 of raping two teenagers and indecently assaulting a woman.

Murder charge

A 17-year-old youth from Surrey has been charged with the murder of Russell Crookes, a student whose body was found in fields near Hadlow, Kent, after being missing for two weeks. He is expected to appear before Maidstone magistrates today. An 18-year-old male is still being questioned.

Bare stage

The Full Monty is to follow other hit films on to the American stage as a Broadway musical. The Oscar-nominated tale of jobless Sheffield men who become strippers is thought to be ideal for stage adaptation as it has many musical interludes. Several producers are said to be interested.

Minnelli tickets

We regret that the Lin Minnelli ticket offer (Metro, page 4) is not valid as the star has cancelled her British tour because of illness.

THE TIMES SATURDAY Docto Hospital from wor

WHEN Stephen Bolin was appointed consultant paediatric surgeon at the Bristol Infirmary in 1988, he was joining a team of paediatric surgeons in the country. He had no idea that there for long would be that operations performed with the senior surgeon, Wisheart, were lasting three times longer than he had attended at the hospital. Wisheart was especially good with babies, who were relatively routine. They would be put to bypass machines for hours, increasing the brain damage and the heart once the operation was over. Wisheart would tell the parents by telling them that the operation had been successful but that the heart had not been removed, so it would have anyway. This did not help with Dr Bolin's explanation and he began to make excuses about what was happening. What was happening? 18 months he felt he had enough data to prove that that infants operated on by Bristol had double the mortality rate of other units doing the same operation. He was also concerned about the outcome of operations, which saw the great arteries of the heart babies born with them have front. The operation was performed in Britain in 1988 and had become an established procedure by the time Janardan Dhasmana, the other consultant surgeon doing paediatric work at Bristol, performed his first such operation there in 1988 and seven of the 14 babies that underwent the operation

THE CONSU Much-g inspire

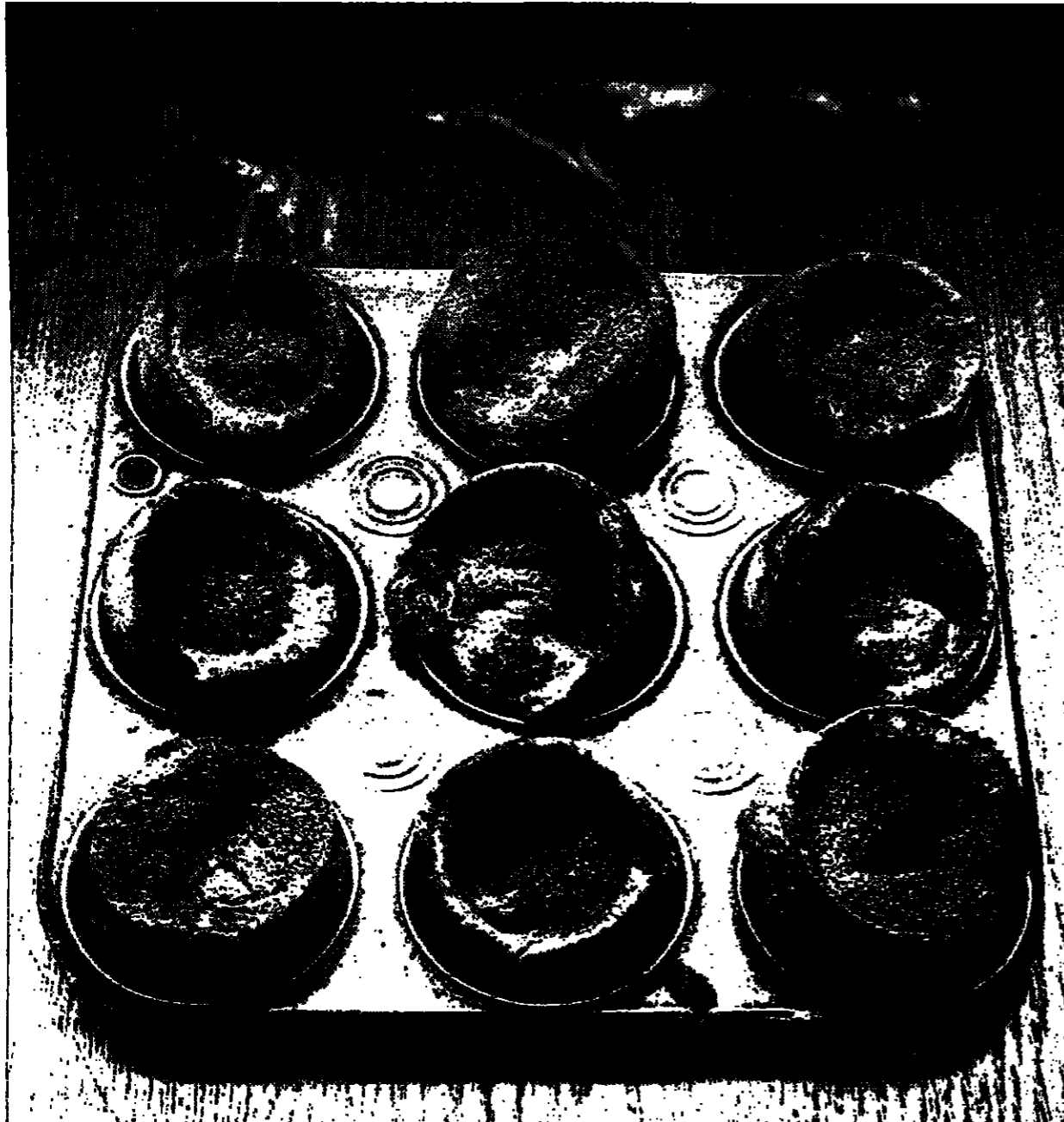
JAMES WISHEART is a softly spoken Ulsterman, who qualified as a doctor in Belfast in 1962 when he was just 24. He was a brilliant student and decided to specialise, first in obstetrics and then in surgery. By the time he was 30 he was a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and marked out as a high-flyer. After working as a senior registrar at the Hospital for Sick Children at Great Ormond Street in London he was appointed as consultant in cardiac and thoracic surgery in 1975 in Bristol, where he decided to settle. By 1984 he was a Fellow of

Deaths put down to bad luck

JANARDAN DHASMANA qualified at Lucknow, India, in 1964 and came to Britain in 1971. He is married and lives in Westbury Park, Bristol. He became senior surgical registrar at Bristol in 1978 and, spent 1980 at the University of Alabama taking a fellowship in cardiac surgery. He returned to Bristol "fired up" in January, 1986, he was appointed consultant in cardiothoracic surgery. In the following year the number of children operated on for heart conditions rose from 70 to 100, under a year old up from 20 to 30. By 1990 the numbers were

Medical co

NEW professional standards are being drawn up by the royal medical colleges to make it impossible for a doctor to continue practising if his performance falls below an acceptable level. This will make it obvious if any surgeon is consistently having poorer outcomes from operations than the national average. The surgeon would not be allowed to work until undergoing some retraining. A recent survey found that 18 of the 199 consultant heart surgeons in Britain had been investigated for alleged incompetence. Although most have been cleared, the fact that so



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Doctor who fought to stop babies dying

Hospital ignored warnings from worried anaesthetist

By IAN MURRAY

WHEN Stephen Bolsin was appointed consultant anaesthetist at the Bristol Royal Infirmary in 1988, he thought he was joining one of the best paediatric surgical teams in the country.

He had not been working there for long when he noticed that operations performed by the senior surgeon, James Wisheart, were lasting up to three times longer than those he had attended at his previous hospital, the Royal Brompton in London. This was especially serious for the babies, who were dying from relatively routine operations. They would be put on heart bypass machines for up to five hours, increasing the risk of brain damage and strain on the heart once the operation was over.

When babies died, Mr Wisheart would try to comfort the parents by telling them that the operation had been a success but that the child's heart had not been strong enough, so it would have died anyway. This did not tally with Dr Bolsin's experience and he began to make notes of what was happening. Within 18 months he felt he had enough data to prove his case that infants operated on at Bristol had double the mortality rate of other units doing the same operation.

He was also concerned about the outcome of switch operations, which swap the great arteries of the heart in babies born with them back to front. The operation was first performed in Britain in 1977 and had become an established procedure by the 1980s. Janardan Dhasmana, the other consultant surgeon doing paediatric work at Bristol, performed his first switch operation there in 1988 and seven of the 14 babies that underwent the operation over



Bolsin prepared a detailed audit

the next four years died. Mortality rates generally were so high that black medical humour dubbed the unit "the departure lounge".

Dr Bolsin decided to write to his senior manager, John Roylance, about his concerns, but he received no written reply. Dr Roylance told Dr Bolsin to raise the matter with Mr Wisheart, who reprimanded him for writing the letter.

Dr Bolsin began to prepare a detailed audit. In 1992 he presented details to the board of the United Bristol Hospital Trust, which had been created in 1991 with Dr Roylance as chief executive and Mr Wisheart as medical director.

No action from the trust was forthcoming, but after Dr Bolsin alerted the Department of Health about his worries, the Royal College of Surgeons found that, in the 18 months up to October 1993, nine out of 13 newborn babies died after operations at Bristol. The mortality rate was 66 per cent compared to the national average of 11 per cent.

£1,979,000 for the financial year 1992-93 and a further £1,988,000 for 1993-94.

The operations continued. Between mid-1992 and the start of 1995, Mr Dhasmana carried out 21 switch operations. Twelve of the babies died and one was severely brain damaged.

Over a similar period, Mr Wisheart's performance in carrying out hole-in-the-heart operations was causing concern. Whereas he succeeded with five of the seven babies he operated on in 1990 and 1991, seven out of eight died between February 1992 and August 1994.

By 1993 Dr Bolsin had an ally in Gianni Angelini, a brilliant but excitable Italian who was appointed Professor of Cardiac Surgery at Bristol University. Professor Angelini, who was trying to make Bristol a major teaching centre for cardiac surgery, drew up a report for the hospital trust board in 1994 in which he called for the appointment of a new paediatric cardiac surgeon and an end to all neonatal switch operations until one was appointed.

The hospital trust board agreed to appoint a new surgeon, but in January 1995, before he arrived, Mr Dhasmana carried out a non-emergency switch operation on an 18-month-old boy, Joshua Loveday, who died on the operating table. Dr Bolsin decided he could no longer continue at the hospital and took up a post in Australia.

The new paediatric heart surgeon, Ash Pawade, arrived from Australia in May 1995 and since then has succeeded in making Bristol one of the safest places in the world for operations on children with congenital heart problems.

The death of Joshua Loveday persuaded Dr Roylance that there was a need for an outside review of paediatric



James Wisheart, leaving the GMC inquiry yesterday, passes a picture of Ian Stewart, left brain-damaged after an operation at Bristol

heart surgery and he invited Marc de Leval, from Great Ormond Street, to undertake it. He concluded that Mr Wisheart had an 87 per cent mortality rate among hole-in-the-heart patients compared with one of 8.6 per cent for Mr Dhasmana.

Summing up his findings in a draft, Mr de Leval wrote that there was no doubt that Mr Dhasmana compared favourably with surgeons in the best British institutions. Mr Wisheart "would be among the higher-risk surgeons".

The report was not meant to be published, and when Dr Roylance discovered it had been promised to a local BBC television reporter he persuaded Mr de Leval to change the

wording in a way that removed any comparison between the two doctors.

Publication of the report was followed by a Channel 4 documentary called *The Lost Children*, which detailed the mortality rates among babies operated on by the two surgeons.

In June 1996, the parents wrote to the GMC asking for an investigation. Mr Wisheart resigned as medical director in December and three months later an independent review of adult cardiology at the hospital revealed that his patients had a four times higher risk of mortality than other surgeons in the unit.

The GMC inquiry began in October 1997.

'We believed his words'

By IAN MURRAY

THE PARENTS

PARENTS of children who died after operations by the two surgeons had no idea that anything was wrong.

"We just thought we were the unlucky few and it was only later we discovered we were one of the unlucky many," said Michaela Willis, whose son Daniel died a week after he was born with a back-to-front heart in May 1993.

"When Mr Dhasmana told us Daniel had an 85 per cent chance of surviving the operation, we believed him totally. It was only when the evidence

writing letters to the Health Department and in June 1996 asked the General Medical Council for an inquiry.

Media coverage of what was going on alerted other parents but it was not until the GMC hearing began last October that they began to be organised into a group by Malcolm Currow, a Devon policeman whose daughter Verity died in 1989.

In February the group demonstrated outside the GMC and presented a petition in Downing Street, calling for a public inquiry. They intend to continue pressing for one.

THE CONSULTANTS WHOSE PATHS CROSSED IN BRISTOL

Much-garlanded high-flyer inspired trust and respect

JAMES WISHEART is a softly spoken Ulsterman, who qualified as a doctor in Belfast in 1962 when he was just 24. He was a brilliant student and decided to specialise, first in obstetrics and then in surgery.

By the time he was 30 he was a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and marked out as a high-flyer.

After working as a senior registrar at the Hospital for Sick Children at Great Ormond Street in London he was appointed as consultant in cardiac and thoracic surgery in 1975 in Bristol, where he decided to settle.

By 1984 he was a Fellow of

the Royal College of Surgeons of England and he helped to establish Bristol as one of the leading centres in Britain for heart surgery.

He became chairman of the hospital medical committee, associate clinical director of cardiothoracic surgery, and in 1992 medical director of the United Bristol Hospitals Trust. To widen his knowledge he made several study trips to America, becoming a research fellow of the University of Alabama.

He kept comprehensive notes of each patient and held twice-weekly meetings to discuss cases. Every month or so colleagues would go to his home to discuss general poli-

cy. He would start work early and finish late, undertaking an extensive workload in both adult and paediatric surgery.

His diligence was rewarded by the National Health Service with merit money. In 1994, four years after he was first made aware of concerns about the safety of his paediatric operations, he was granted an A award, worth £28,995 a year, in addition to his £55,705 salary. He and his wife, Janet, consequently enjoy a comfortable lifestyle and home is an impressive three-storey Georgian villa.

Mr Wisheart was at the very top of his profession. Maria Shortis, whose nine-

week-old daughter Jacinta died after a heart operation at the hospital, said: "As he walked about you could see that he generated respect from everyone. People spoke of him in hushed tones.

"He is a very able communicator and so experienced that he always inspired trust. If he told you that your child had an 80 per cent chance of surviving an operation, you automatically believed him.

"He is mild-mannered and seems so caring. I am a parent of a child who died there, yet when I saw him before the GMC my immediate reaction was to think: 'You poor man. What are these people trying to do to you?'"

Deaths put down to bad luck

JANARDAN DHASMANA qualified at Lucknow, India, in 1964 and came to Britain in 1971. He is married and lives in Westbury Park, Bristol.

He became senior surgical registrar at Bristol in 1978 and, on Mr Wisheart's advice, spent 1980 at the University of Alabama taking a fellowship in cardiac surgery. He returned to Bristol "fired up" to do paediatric work.

In January, 1986, he was appointed consultant in cardiothoracic surgery. In the following year the number of children operated on for heart conditions rose from 70 to 100, with the number of those under a year old up from 20 to 30. By 1990 the numbers were



Dhasmana: 20 babies died in 38 operations

up to 160, of whom 40 were under a year old.

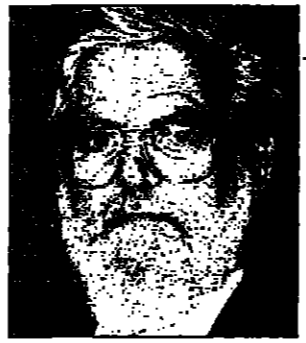
Two years later he began doing the operations to switch the great arteries on babies born with them the wrong way round. He was to perform 38 such operations: 20 babies died. He admitted to the GMC that he was on a learning curve and carried on because he thought he was having beginner's bad luck.

Consultant turned manager

JOHN ROYLANCE qualified in 1954 and a year later took a short service commission as a doctor in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He trained as a radiologist, becoming a fellow of the Faculty of Radiologists in 1964.

He worked as a radiology registrar at Southmead Hospital in Bristol from 1959 to 1963, when he obtained a job at Bristol Royal Infirmary, becoming a consultant radiologist a year later.

Elected a fellow of the Royal College of Radiologists when it was formed in 1975, he became an examiner in the specialty and editor of the *British Journal of Radiology*. A member of the Council of



Roylance elected fellow of his royal college

British Radiology, he had also served for a while as chairman of the Bristol health district in the late 1970s. He remained a consultant until 1985 when he became district general manager for the hospital.

Appointed chief executive of the new hospital trust in 1991, he was also a member of the University Medical Board and of the United Bristol Hospitals, and one of the trustees.

Medical colleges to raise standards

NEW professional standards are being drawn up by the royal medical colleges to make it impossible for a doctor to continue practising if his performance falls below an acceptable level.

This will make it obvious if any surgeon is consistently having poorer outcomes from operations than the national average. The surgeon would not be allowed to work until undergoing some retraining.

A recent survey found that 18 of the 199 consultant heart surgeons in Britain had been investigated for alleged incompetence. Although most have been cleared, the fact that so

THE FUTURE

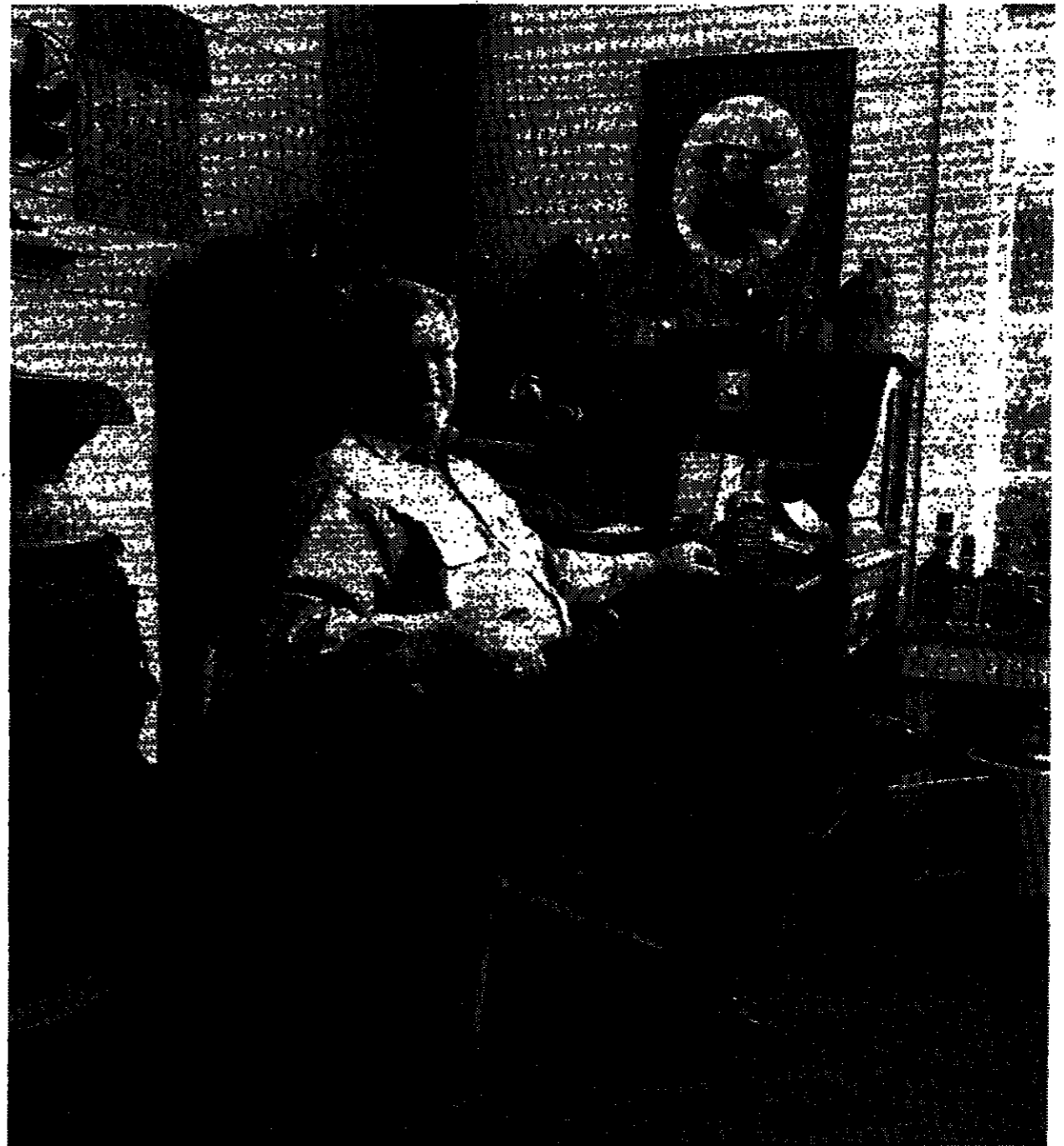
many have been under review means that some are not prepared to carry out difficult operations for fear of repercussions if things go wrong. Others are being deterred from entering a high-risk specialty where mistakes show up so easily. On average, a heart surgeon can expect to perform about eight operations a week and up to 250 a year.

All hospital specialties are being asked to supply information on which the new standards can be based. For heart surgery, death rates for the different procedures will probably serve

as the baseline. Orthopaedic surgeons could be judged by the frequency of repeat hip replacement operations.

The idea for the system came from the British Medical Association. The Academy of Royal Medical Colleges has now taken on the task of collecting the information, which will form the basis of the system.

The Government is also working on plans to improve clinical performance through the Commission for Health Improvement and the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, which are being created in line with last November's White Paper on reforming the National Health Service.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKY

كنا من الأصل

New player hijacks Woodward drama

As the case draws to its close, it is becoming a soap opera, write Tunku Varadarajan and Daniel McGrory

THE Louise Woodward drama, which has held the world's attention for well over a year, now has a new lead player. Days before the verdict in the appeal by both prosecution and defence is expected in Boston, Elaine Whitfield Sharp, a member of the Woodward legal defence team has usurped the British au pair's place at the centre of the stage.

Woodward was found guilty of second-degree murder after the child in her care, eight-month-old Matthew Eappen, died from brain and skull injuries in February 1997. As an international clamour grew for her release, a Massachusetts judge freed her from prison last November when the charge was reduced to manslaughter. If her appeal fails, she could be sent back to jail with a minimum of 15 years before parole.

Ms Whitfield Sharp, 44 and born in Chester, is the woman with whom Woodward has been living since her release from prison last year by Judge Hiller Zobel. Homely, overweight and bespectacled, she became a familiar sight to television viewers as she sat by Woodward's side throughout the trial. It would be no exaggeration to say that she came to be seen by Woodward as a kind of mother figure.

Ms Whitfield Sharp spoke not a word during the case, but her taciturnity in court has now been eclipsed by her alleged outspokenness out of it. She made the headlines this week after she was stopped by a Massachusetts state trooper and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol. The officer, Sergeant Randy Cipolletta, later filed a report in which he stated that she had said that she now believed that Woodward was guilty of causing the death of Matthew.

According to the report, she attributed her drinking to a crisis of conscience. The lawyer denied that she had said any such thing, and accused the trooper of concocting a fiction to blacken her name. One of the reasons he would have done so, she contended, was that she had once defended the wife of another trooper in an acrimonious child custody case.

Ms Whitfield Sharp, who did not contest the drink-driving charges in court the next day and who agreed to submit to alcohol counselling, is well known to the British journalists who followed Woodward's trial and subsequent appeal.

But others who know her say there is a less convivial side to Ms Whitfield Sharp, and speak of her sharp tongue and temper. In one instance, in 1991, she was jailed by a judge in Michigan for contempt of court after she made a series of insolent remarks to him. After the contretemps with the trooper, Ms Whitfield Sharp has come swiftly under the spotlight of the British tabloids. *The Mirror*, citing a secretly taped conversation the lawyer had with a friend, has said that she described Woodward as "a pain in the ass" and a liar who was secretly negotiating a book deal. *The Express* reported that Ms Whitfield Sharp had "kicked Louise out" from her home after the au pair had engaged in a series of bizarre rituals, including séances.

There appears to be truth in the report that Woodward is no longer living in the Sharp home. On Thursday night, *The Times* tracked her down to the home of Tim Hunt, another British expatriate in Marblehead, the prosperous Massachusetts village in which Ms Whitfield Sharp lives. Woodward answered the telephone at the Hunt home and said that the family was out. She hung up when asked whether she was now living there.

Support for Woodward was unwavering in her Cheshire village last night as friends insisted they have not mis-spent the £250,000 public donations to her campaign. Once again the residents of Elton gathered outside The Rigger pub to defend Woodward's reputation. In a succession of television interviews they lined up to insist on the 20-year-old au pair's innocence and deny accusations that she is secretly negotiating a £30,000 book deal to cash in on her notoriety.

The vicar, the Rev Ken Davey, who is chairman of the campaign fund, said there was no impropriety in how the money had been spent. He said: "Everything is fully accounted for, as far as the trustees are concerned. Any allegations that there is no accountability would be downright lies."

Mr Davey said last night that the fund had received a bill from Ms Whitfield Sharp and added that it might not be able to meet all the costs. "There is less than £50,000 left. We have spent over £200,000 in legal fees, where the bulk of the money has gone. Just over £250,000 came in".

Sandra McCabe, who helped to start the fund, said: "My support is not wavering, and I don't think anyone else's is. People here support her as much as ever. We just want a verdict, that would be the best thing for Louise."



Elaine Whitfield Sharp in court with Woodward. The lawyer has taken centre stage after her alleged outburst

◀ We want a verdict, that would be the best thing for Louise ▶

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This week

"In search of a brave new world, they found a great new recipe for chicken."

CAJUN COUNTRY. There's more to Cajun history than Shrimp Gumbo and accordions. Peter McCarthy investigates one of the more shameful episodes in Britain's history and how modern day Cajunians and Cajuns are still coming to terms with it. Sunday afternoons from 31 May, 12.04 - 12.30.

"Seats available in the front row - in your front room."

FRONT ROW. Catch our complete new series programme and stay sharper than a shark in front of the tube. Discussion, features, reviews and interviews, fronted by Mark Lawson and Frankie Stock. Weekday evenings, 7.15 - 7.45.

"See the world through the eyes of two colour blind policemen."

AN INSPECTOR CALLS. A two-part series investigating racism and equality in this week's programmes. PC's Couch and Armitage of 'Wagtails' Racial Incident Unit lead with racism and racism face-to-face. Monday evenings from 1 June, 8.02 - 8.30.

"There were some people that tortured me, but there were some people who were a bandage to my wounds."
(Vedran, displaced person.)

AFTER THE FIGHTING IS OVER. Larry Hollingworth, former Chief of Operations for the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, returns to Bosnia. He visits the men, women and children who became his friends and talks to them about their past tragedies and future hopes. Tuesday mornings from 2 June, 11.02 - 11.30.

"What is the next number in the following series?
4, 2, 3, 4, 6, 2, 3, 9, ..."

PUZZLE PLANET. Loren in and China Maslanka and his band of mathematical chess players and other people with large foreheads set, analyse and solve puzzles. Thursday afternoons from 4 June, 1.30 - 2.00. Repeated Sunday evenings, 11.02.

"If Hugh Laurie is the Prime Minister and Stephen Fry wants to be the next Director General of the BBC, who is murdering London's dentists?"

IN THE CHAIR. Michael Williams, Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie head an all-star cast in this new political comedy from the award-winning creator of 'In the Red'. Friday evenings from 5 June, 6.30 - 7.00. Repeated Saturday lunchtimes, 12.30.

"You are what you eat, so get to know yourself better."

THE FOOD PROGRAMME. Derek Cooper calls you all you'll ever need to know about what you eat. A celebration of food - how it's grown, where it comes from and how to cook it. Saturday mornings, 11.02 - 11.30. Repeated on Monday afternoons, 4.02.

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YOU'LL SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

Severn Bridge's short cut to glory

Engineering triumph wins Grade I listing 32 years after it opened, reports Marcus Binney

THE first Severn road bridge, one of the triumphs of British engineering, received the accolade of a Grade I listing yesterday, only 32 years after its official opening on September 8, 1966.

Announcing the listing of ten postwar bridges, Tony Banks, Under-Secretary in the Culture Department, said the bridge was "a design classic of international importance".

The bridge was begun in 1961 to the designs of Freeman Fox and Partners, with Mott Hay & Anderson (now Mott MacDonald) and Sir Percy Thomas, and was built in tandem with the Forth Road Bridge that opened two years earlier.

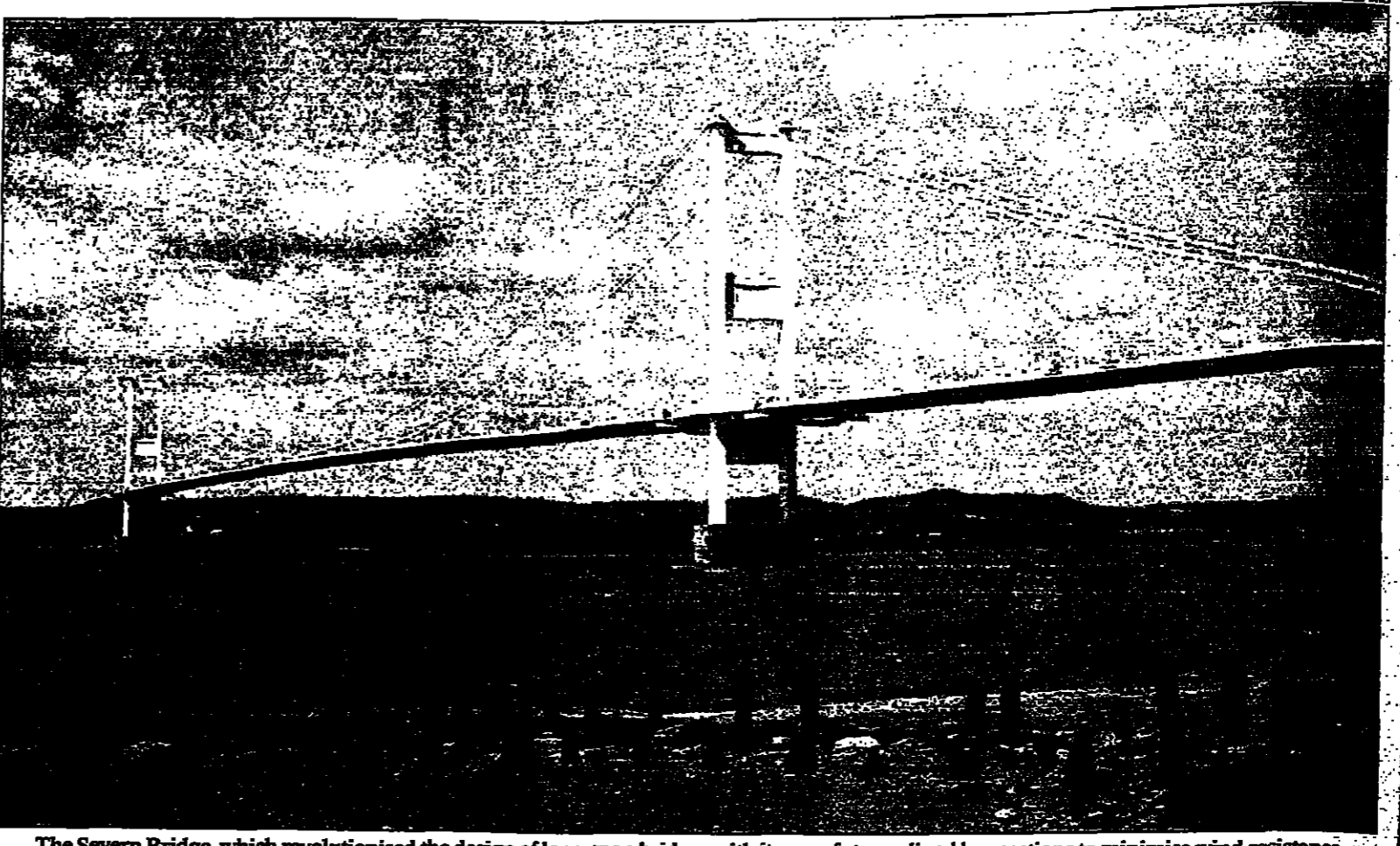
Suspension bridge designers the world over had taken fright at the collapse of "Galloping Gertie", a suspension bridge with a 2,800ft span in Washington State, which began to twist and buckle in a moderate wind of 42mph and, on November 7, 1940, crashed into the water below.

For the next quarter of a century, all major suspension bridges were massively constructed with a stiffening truss beneath the road deck. Colin Davis, head of bridge design at Mott MacDonald, recalled: "Wind-tunnel tests for the Forth Road Bridge allowed us to develop a new lightweight form of construction for the Severn Bridge. Instead of a strengthening truss, the bridge is formed of a streamlined box that minimises wind resistance and allows huge economies in scale and materials."

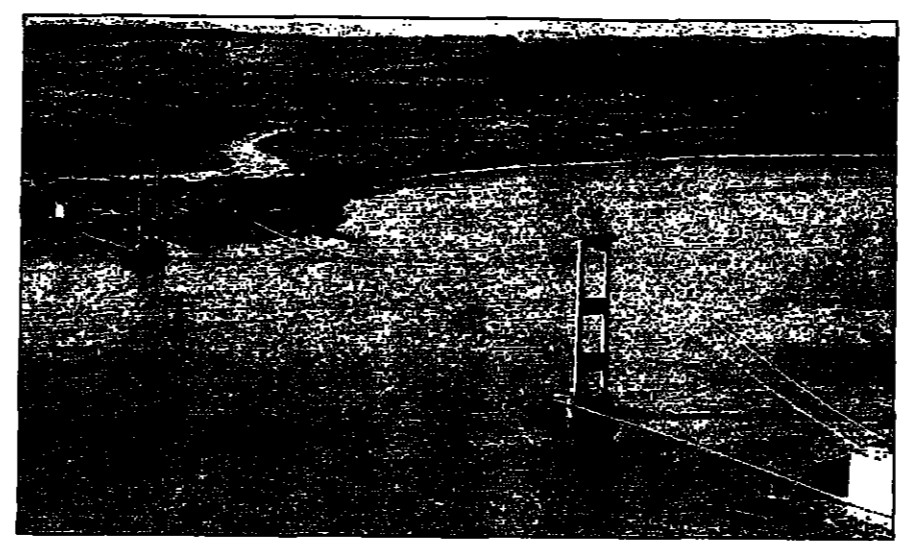
Work began in 1961. The Severn's swift flow and high tides created severe problems in setting the foundations for the bridge piers. With the west pier, workmen were able to work on the base only during two 20-minute periods a day at low tide. After the towers were built, the deck sections were prefabricated in 60ft lengths at a steelworks in Chesham, floated down the river and lifted into position.

The desire for innovation led Freeman Fox to develop the "box-girder" bridge, in which "box" sections were craned into position and welded outwards from the bridge piers. But within three months two of their box-girder bridges collapsed, one at Millford Haven, killing four men, and another at Melbourne, Australia, killing 35.

The name Freeman Fox disappeared when the firm was taken over in the 1980s; with it went many records of great importance. The Department of Transport commis-



The Severn Bridge, which revolutionised the design of long-span bridges with its use of streamlined box sections to minimise wind resistance



Construction was hampered by the Severn's strong currents and high tides

sioned two practices to work in conjunction on the design of the Severn Bridge because it wanted the strongest possible team for the pioneering structure. However, Sir Gilbert Roberts of Freeman Fox is believed to have been the lead designer.

By the early 1980s, the bridge was carrying three times the load for which it was designed, and in 1983 an engineer's report stated that the bridge's twin towers could collapse without warning in a high wind; even with no traffic on it, the bridge might collapse in a 100mph wind. High-sided vehicles had to be banned from using the bridge in high winds.

Strengthening was carried out between 1985 and 1991. The hangers supporting the road deck were replaced and the towers reinforced by internal tubular columns. Mr Davis said: "The bridge is now fully compliant with all Department of Transport specifica-

tions and is a very robust and durable structure. We have people on site carrying out maintenance from day to day and it has a good long life ahead of it."

Mott MacDonald has gone from strength to strength. Mr Davis said: "The bridge made Britain the world centre for long-span bridges. We have recently designed the Tsing Ma bridge link to the new airport in Hong Kong and are now working on another link

to Lantau island [also in the former colony] some 4,600ft long."

There are 169 Grade I listed bridges in England and 190 equivalents in Scotland: the Forth Road Bridge is not among them, although the rail bridge is. The listed bridges in England include the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol; the high-level bridge in Newcastle upon Tyne, the Salton Ash Railway Bridge and Tower Bridge in London.

Feats that span a brilliant career

ONE of Britain's most brilliant engineers emerged from obscurity last night to take much of the credit for designing and building five of the world's greatest suspension bridges (Marcus Binney writes).

Michael Parsons, of the engineering firm Freeman Fox & Partners, played a key role not only in the Severn Bridge but in the Forth Road Bridge, both the suspension bridges across the Bosphorus and the Humber Bridge.

Mr Parsons also had a hand in the design of the Dome of Discovery for the Festival of Britain exhibition in 1951 and ended his career doing outline drawings for the Straits of Messina crossing between Italy and Sicily which, if built, will become the world's longest bridge span. Mr Parsons said: "When I joined the firm in 1949, there

were outline designs for the towers of the Severn Bridge by the architect Sir Percy Thomas. He wanted portal-type bridge towers, as opposed to the cross-braced towers of the Forth Bridge."

He said the obvious place to build the bridge was where the second crossing is now, using a lot of viaduct with a small bridge over the navigational channel. "But our chief designer had been impressed with the big American suspension bridges. They used concrete decking and heavy supporting trusses. We reduced the cost and amount of material by designing an aerodynamic steel box."

Mr Parsons was placed in charge of the crucial engineering analysis for the Forth Road Bridge. On the Severn Bridge he carried out the wind tunnel tests and ended up as resident engineer.

Culture? Beaches? Art? Motoring? Street life? Sport?



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A light lunch is a waste of time

By Nigel Hawton
SCIENCE

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A light lunch is a waste of time

By Nigel Hawkes
SCIENCE EDITOR

SELF-DENIAL at lunch-time is unlikely to have any effect on the waistline, a study in America has shown. People simply compensate later in the day, eating more fat or carbohydrate to bring them to the level at which they feel comfortable.

The result is that they eat the same amount of fat or carbohydrate each day, regardless of how healthy their lunch might be, according to Professor John Allred, of Ohio State University, who led the study.

He enrolled 25 male college students and for three weeks gave them a modest lunch consisting of an instant milkshake. The shakes were formulated either with full-fat milk, skimmed milk or skimmed milk plus sugar. The full-fat shakes provided 614 calories and the skimmed milkshakes 516, unless sugar was added to bring them back to 614. The students kept food diaries recording everything else they ate.

The results were clear-cut. Those who had the higher-fat shakes compensated by eating more carbohydrate for the rest of the day, while those who had the lower-fat shakes with sugar made up for it by eating more fat. Those who were deprived of calories by being given the low-fat shakes without sugar simply added the extra calories by eating more later in the day.

"There seem to be biochemical signals that, unknown to you, regulate calorie, carbohydrate and fat intake," Professor Allred told a recent meeting of the American Society of Nutritional Scientists. "Our bodies are much more in control of our food choices than we think they are."



Members of the Harrow Leisure Club working out in their efforts to be fit

The toughest question in sport: who is fittest?

The race to find the answer starts next week, reports David Powell

IT MAY be an inexact science, but a competition will be launched next Wednesday to find Britain's fittest man and woman.

Some say it cannot be done — "there are a million types of fitness". Max Jones, Britain's chief athletics coach, said — but the organisers of the London Triathlon believe that they have come up with the best test yet.

Triathlons have replaced the marathon as the modern examination of endurance. However, the swim-cycling-run combination barely scratches the surface compared to the demands of the X Zone, a challenge that involves ten gymnasium-based disciplines. Among them is a step-climb equivalent to the height of the Blackpool Tower.

Michael Smithwick, the London Triathlon manager who is behind the X Zone challenge, is adamant that, because his competition tests a broad range of fitness, and because it is being promoted through 2,700 health clubs, the winners will be entitled to call themselves Britain's fittest man and woman.

Mr Smithwick rejects the suggestion that the absence of stars from professional sport, such as Alan Shearer, Tim Henman and Chris Boardman, will render the X Zone worthless in its aim. "There is no professional sportsman who would get anywhere near the guy who wins this," Mr Smithwick said. "These are going to be people who do multiple sport all the time. They would beat any footballer, rower, cyclist or boxer."

It is a view that Tim Foster, a member of Britain's world champion coxless fours rowing team, goes some way to endorsing. "A lot of people at the top of any particular sport have to specialise in what they do," he said.

"The X Zone, by combining cycling, rowing, running, push-ups etc, is going to be a whole-body competition.

Going from one test to another without a rest is incredibly tough."

Up to 1,000 competitors will be accepted for the two-day competition at the NEC, Birmingham, next March. They will have to go through two rounds and a final, racing in groups of ten or 12 along rows of almost £1 million worth of machines. Other

peers to raise something like £200,000 for each charity," Mr Smithwick said.

The thought of competition never crosses the mind of many a fitness club addict. "For a lot of people, it is the quest for the perfect body that motivates them," Tiago Carvalho, manager of a club in Chichester, West Sussex, said. He is half right in relation to

trying to judge the brain of Britain. Is it on general knowledge? Is it like *Mastermind*, where you pick your own category, or is it on IQ? This competition is one version of fitness."

Tim Anstiss, a former Great Britain international decathlete, a contender in television's *Gladiators* and now a doctor in sports medicine at West London Healthcare Trust, said the X Zone was the best test he knew to find Britain's fittest sportsman and woman. "Technically, the way to find the fittest person would be to do maximal fitness testing on everybody and find the person with the highest VO₂ max."

That would give us the person who can bring in the most oxygen from the atmosphere and metabolise it in the working muscles. Generally, that is done in a laboratory and that is dry and academic.

"What is interesting about this is that the athletes are going from event to event and they are going to develop fatigue in one set of muscles, then in another set. Physiologically, it is very demanding. If the cost doesn't wind up the effort will.

For X Zone entry details, contact Esprit Marketing, 176 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8ER. Tel: 0171-928 5055



There is no professional sportsman who would get anywhere near the winner

than cycling, running and rowing, disciplines include a 10ft wall climb (15ft in the final), chin-ups and dips. The competition will be split into age-groups. "We also want people of 40, 50, 60 or 70 to enter," Mr Smithwick said.

The main stumbling blocks are the £220 entry fee (hotel included) and the commitment each entrant must make to raise money for one of five nominated charities. "We ex-

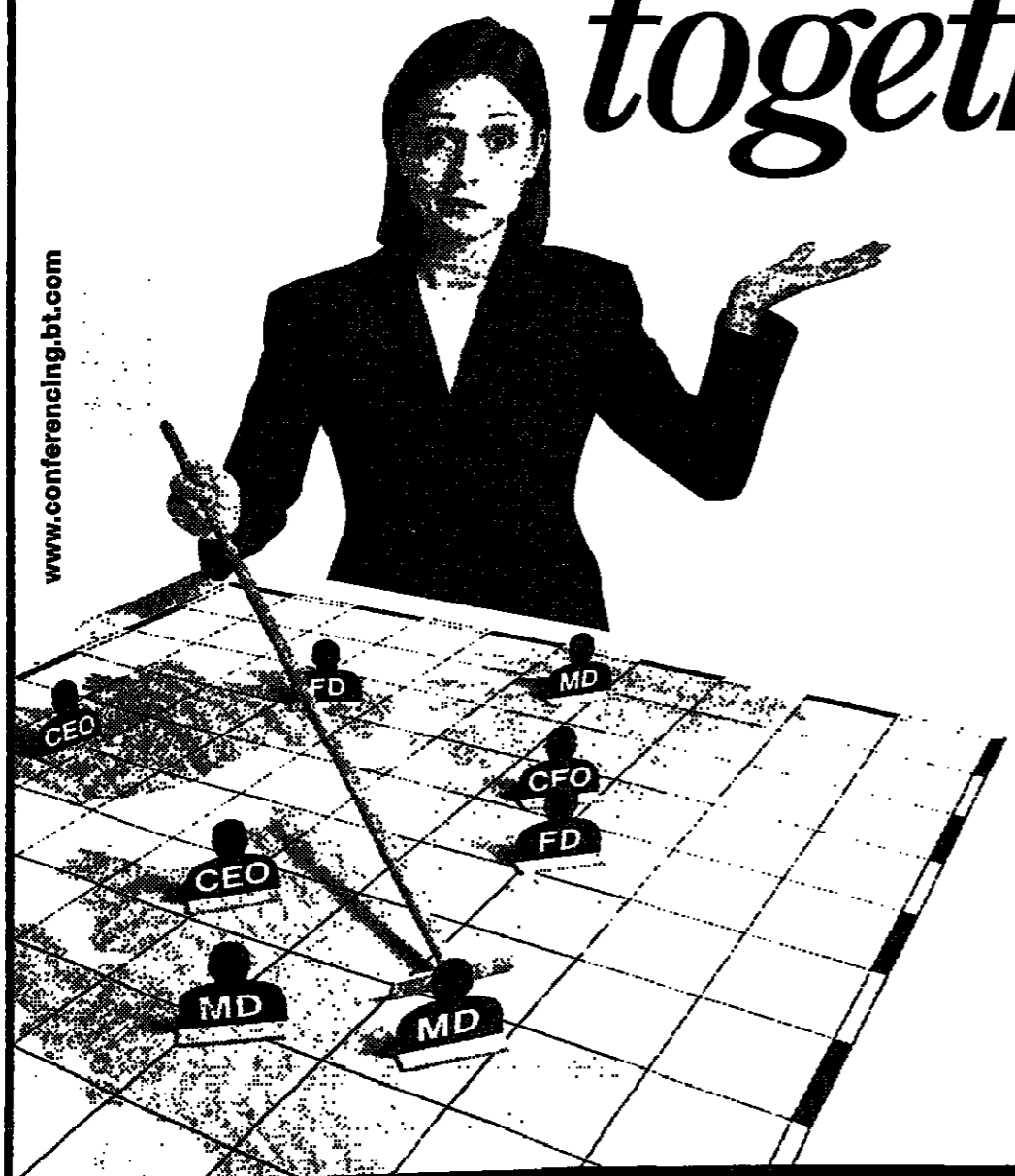
pect to raise something like £200,000 for each charity," Mr Smithwick said. "We also want people of 40, 50, 60 or 70 to enter," Mr Smithwick said. "The main stumbling blocks are the £220 entry fee (hotel included) and the commitment each entrant must make to raise money for one of five nominated charities. "We ex-

pect to raise something like £200,000 for each charity," Mr Smithwick said.

HOW FIT ARE YOU?					
Discipline	Task	Average fit male min:sec	Average fit female min:sec	Super fit male min:sec	Super fit female min:sec
Recurrent cycling	1.5km	2:45	3:20	2:25	2:54
Push-ups	40 (men), 25 (women)	1:40	1:40	1:15	1:15
Running machine	2km	8:00	9:36	7:30	9:00
Chin ups	20reps	1:40	2:00	1:25	1:42
Tyres/balance beam/tyres	10 metres course	0:25	0:30	0:20	0:25
Rowing machine	1.5k	6:50	8:12	6:30	7:48
Scaling wall with rope	10ft	0:40	1:00	0:30	0:45
Step machine	40 floors	7:30	9:00	6:48	8:10
Exercise bike	3km	6:00	7:12	5:12	6:50
Cargo Net	20ft	3:00	3:36	2:45	3:18
Finishing times		38:30	46:06	34:40	42:07

*Guideline figures supplied by Alex Johns, X Zone race director

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THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 29 1999

WEEKEND MONEY 63

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Sex guide rabbi listed for preacher prize

By RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

AN ORTHODOX rabbi whose book *Kosher Sex* has caused much controversy is one of the 30 preachers shortlisted for *The Times* Preacher of the Year award.

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, 31, head of the Jewish L'Chaim society, is one of eight rabbis selected from more than 200 entries from Christian and Jewish preachers. Yesterday he disclosed plans to launch a breakaway Orthodox synagogue in North London.

In his book, Rabbi Boteach attempts to show how it is possible to have a fulfilling sex life while remaining strictly within Jewish law. He deals explicitly with acts such as oral sex. Amid the furor this created, Rabbi Boteach felt he had no choice but to resign from Willesden Orthodox Synagogue, part of the United Synagogue movement headed by Dr Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi.

The United Synagogue rabbinical council had sent a statement to Dr Sacks accusing Rabbi Boteach of expressing views "not in accordance with Jewish law. Referring to his link with the United Synagogue, the rabbi said: "We strongly urge that such an association cease."

In yesterday's *Jewish Chronicle*, Rabbi Boteach denounced "rabbinical terrorism" and accused his critics of consigning Judaism "to a



Shmuley Boteach, who has resigned from his synagogue and plans to set up a breakaway worshipping group in North London

dark age of anti-intellectualism". He says he resigned because he did not want to place the Chief Rabbi in a "difficult position vis-à-vis his own rabbinate".

Although Dr Sacks has not commented publicly on the dispute, his office has been supportive of Rabbi Boteach, and in a statement last

week a spokesman for the Chief Rabbi praised Rabbi Boteach as "one of the more creative and imaginative talents of our community".

Rabbi Boteach was sent to England ten years ago by the American-based Lubavitch movement. He was selected for the final

of the Preacher of the Year award for a sermon titled: "I Am the Messiah." In this he says Jewish people have suffered endless misery because of their concept of the Messiah, and have been hounded repeatedly for rejecting various candidates for the post put up by other nations. He argues: "The Jews

are the bearers of a dream that we must translate into reality through the Messiah."

Rabbi Boteach revolutionised Saturday morning worship at Willesden by bringing women down from the balcony to be alongside the men, albeit separated by a screen down the aisle. He did away with the

traditional choir and cantor and introduced communal singing.

While women cannot be ordained rabbis in Orthodox Judaism, unlike in the Reform and Liberal branches, Rabbi Boteach invited a woman along at the end of each service to give her views on the Torah reading for the day. For his first service two months ago, more than 200 people turned up, compared with the average of 50.

Rabbi Boteach said: "My book is about holiness in relationships and how that can lead to eroticism and passion. It is about having sex in the dark, the way the Talmud teaches, because sex in the dark is about the fusion of personalities."

Rabbi Boteach's shortlisted sermon, along with the other 29 sermons and the winning sermon preached by last year's winner, will be published in *The Fourth Times Book of Best Sermons* (£9.99, Cassell) in November.

The 30 shortlisted preachers will be assessed during the summer. The five finalists will preach on a topic of their choice at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, on November 27 in a service beginning at midday. All are welcome.

The winner will receive £1,000 and a trophy. Runners-up will receive £250 each. *The Preacher of the Year Award* is sponsored by *The Times* and organised with the help of the Methodist Church and Premier Christian Radio.

SHORTLIST

- John Aldridge, Methodist, Great Glen, Leicestershire; Imogen de la Bera, St Albans; Neil Shun- Anglican, Bradford; Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, North London; Canon Michael Botting, Anglican, Hoole, Chester; Canon Dr Alan Goodson, Anglican, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex; Michael Bourdeaux, Anglican, Keaton Institute, Oxford; Rev Martin Cameron, Immanuel United Reformed Church, Swindon; Rabbi Howard Cooper, Finchley Reform Synagogue, North London; Rabbi Colin Eiser, Reform Synagogue, Woodwich Central Baptist Church, south-east London; Rabbi Dr David Goldberg, Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St John's Wood, north-west London; John's Wood, north-west London; Alan Goodson, Anglican, Humberston, North Lincolnshire; Rev Trevor Hancock, Methodist, Warley, West Midlands; Rabbi Frank Heller, Finchley Progressive Synagogue, North London; Rabbi Dr Margaret Jacob, Birmingham Progressive Synagogue; Rabbi Stephen Hendon, Reform Synagogue, north-west London; Dr Arnold Kallet, Methodist, Knarborough, North Yorkshire; the Rev Dr Joyan Mitchell, Anglican, Christchurch, Edinburgh; the Rev Joan Probst, Anglican, Whiston, near Merseyside; Rabbi Dr Harry Rabinowitz, Hendon Synagogue, north-west London; Rev Jim Rice, East Belfast Methodist Mission; the Rev Maryn Roberts, religious affairs correspondent, BBC Radio Cooventry; Christine Stewart, Methodist, Erdington; Birmingham; the Rev Mike Starkey, Anglican, St John's Church, Birmingham; the Rev John Sweeney, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Sheffield; Michael Toplis, Methodist, Walsall; West Midlands; Rev Jonathan Whitton, Anglican, Chesterham; Rev Harry Young, Baptist, Westward Ho!, Devon; Canon John Young, York Minister.

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COMET

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Twice-married former nun made provost

By Gillian Harris
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT



Byrne described her job as an "immense challenge"

A FORMER nun who married a former monk, divorced and later remarried has been appointed Provost of St Paul's Cathedral in Dundee.

The Rev Miriam Byrne, 52, will be the first woman priest in Britain to be in charge of a cathedral in the Anglican community. Her appointment comes four years after the Scottish Episcopal Church decided, after a long and often acrimonious debate, to admit women to the priesthood.

Ms Byrne replaces Michael Bunge, who left the Church after being found guilty of defrauding a project he set up to help the unemployed. He used the £52,000 he embezzled to buy works of art, antiques, a BMW, a computer and a pony.

Ms Byrne said yesterday: "I am following a very controversial character and the pain and trauma of the congregation is palpable. This is something which will have to be handled sensitively, but it is an immense challenge."

Ms Byrne, who has three adult sons and two stepsons. Is currently priest-in-charge at St Augustine's in Dumbarton, near Glasgow, where she lives

with her second husband, Harris, a librarian at St Columba's in Glasgow. At 16, Ms Byrne joined the Vocation Sisters, a Roman Catholic order. She left seven years later before taking her final vows. Within months, she met her future husband, who had been a monk for a brief romance, stayed together for 18 years and had three sons. But Ms Byrne was convinced that the marriage had been a mistake. They divorced and she enrolled at Westcott House, Cambridge, to train for the Anglican ministry.

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Yeltsin's tough talk on tax eases crisis

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday demonstrated his willingness to take tough action to deal with Russia's economic crisis by sacking the head of the state tax service and taking the first steps towards seizing the assets of corporate tax defaulters.

Aleksandr Pochinok became the second senior official to lose his job since the crisis in the Russian stock market forced the Government to triple interest rates to 150 per cent on Wednesday to protect the ruble. On Thursday, Mr Yeltsin dismissed Yuri Bespalov, chief executive of the state-owned oil company Rosneft, over the failure of an auction of 75 per cent of its shares which was to have provided the Government with \$2.1 billion (£1.3 billion) in revenue.

Mr Pochinok is being replaced by Boris Fyodorov, a financial expert who once worked at the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development and served as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister in the Government of

A second official has been sacrificed to cure Russia's financial problems,

Robin Lodge writes from Moscow



Fyodorov: new head of the Russian tax service

Viktor Chernomyrdin between 1992 and 1994.

He faces a daunting task. Despite repeated government campaigns and the high profile of Russia's tax police, who carry out raids in flak jackets

and balaclavas and toting AK-47 automatic rifles, tax evasion has become deep-seated. The tax authorities have concentrated their efforts against small-scale businesses, whose contributions have had a negligible effect on the economy, while many of the big corporations have been left untouched.

The situation has been exacerbated by a vicious circle of inter-enterprise debt that has left many concerns unable to pay their taxes.

Yesterday Sergei Kiriyenko, the Prime Minister, was meeting senior tax officials and drawing up a list of about 20 companies identified as major tax-dodgers and starting procedures for seizing their assets. According to Interfax, the companies in question owe about \$800 million. The Gov-

ernment's response to the crisis appears to have paid off. The ruble gained slightly against the dollar yesterday for the second day running and share prices fell slightly.

The Government issued a statement saying it was confident that the measures it had initiated would be sufficient to deal with the crisis and announced plans to raise \$2.4 billion through further privatisation of state enterprises.

Mr Kiriyenko, who was appointed last month with the specific task of reviving the Russian economy, received a further boost yesterday when the International Monetary Fund welcomed his efforts and said it would recommend the release of the latest \$670 million instalment of its \$9.2 billion loan to Russia.

At the same time Mikhail Zadornov, the Finance Minister, dismissed reports that Russia was seeking additional support from the IMF or any other foreign creditors.

Markets stabilise, page 27
IMF approval, page 30



Children at a Salvation Army soup kitchen in a Moscow rail terminal yesterday

Mandela's man takes over suspect military

FROM SAM KILEY IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa's first black general took command of the defence forces yesterday during a spectacular parade marred by persistent suspicions about the loyalty of white officers to President Mandela's Government.

During the 17-gun salute that greeted his takeover of the 50,000-strong armed forces, General Sibhwe Nyanda may have reflected on the words of Ronnie Kasrils, the Deputy Defence Minister, who spoke recently of a "third force" hoping to derail South Africa's young democracy.

Nine months ago a report from a team of British officers on a training mission criticised many of South Africa's military old guard for failing to come to terms with a transformed defence force.

The last commander, General Georg Meiring, took early retirement after giving credibility to an "intelligence report" that linked Michael Jackson, the singer, and General Nyanda in a coup plot.

McVeigh likens Oklahoma bomb to raids on Iraq

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

IN A lengthy essay written from death row, Timothy McVeigh has described the 1995 Oklahoma bombing that killed 168 adults and children as morally equivalent to American military actions against foreign targets.

McVeigh, 24, the decorated Gulf War veteran convicted of planting a huge fertiliser bomb outside the Alfred Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, condemned US foreign policy as hypocritical in the article, published by *Media Bypass*, a magazine for right-wing militants.

"Whether you wish to admit it or not, when you approve, morally, of the bombing of foreign targets by the US military, you are approving of acts morally equivalent to the bombing in Oklahoma City," he wrote. "It seems ironic and hypocritical that an act as viciously condemned in Oklahoma is now a 'justified' response to a problem in a foreign land. The history of United States policy over the last century, when examined fully, tends to exemplify hypocrisy."

McVeigh planted his explosive in a rentedorry directly beneath a daycare centre on the second floor of the federal

building. The blast immediately killed 19 children.

In Oklahoma, he said, "family convenience" had explained the presence of the daycare centre between street level and the law enforcement agencies on upper floors. In the case of Iraq, however, such a centre in a government building was described by US officials as "a shield".

The Administration had continued its bombing raids against Iraqi targets in the knowledge that children were present, information he said had not existed in the Oklahoma City bombing. "When a US plane or cruise missile is used to bring destruction to a foreign people, this nation rewards the bombers with applause and praise," he said. "Unfortunately, the morality of killing is not so superficial. The truth is the use of a truck, a plane or a missile for the delivery of a weapon of mass destruction does not alter the nature of the act itself."

Richard Azar of the magazine said the handwritten essay had arrived unsolicited from the prison in Florence, Colorado, where McVeigh is on death row. Its authenticity was confirmed by mail with the prisoner.

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ASIA ARMS CRISIS

Pakistani war drums fail to unnerve Delhi

PAKISTANIS awoke yesterday to a country that seemed on the verge of war. The official propaganda machine has justified Thursday's five nuclear explosions, and draconian measures imposed under a subsequent state of emergency, by warning of Indian aggression in Kashmir. The largely illiterate population smells a battle coming.

Kashmir threats mere rhetoric, Christopher Thomas reports in Islamabad

It is a contrived crisis. India has made no special troop deployments, aside from some strengthening of positions in the immediate border areas to thwart a traditional spring-time movement of armed militants across the mountains from Pakistan. The Islamic state is believed to have moved its new Ghauri missiles to border areas, but more for show than necessity.

Villages on both sides of the 1947 ceasefire line, later slightly modified and renamed the line of actual control, occupy the most dangerous border region in the world, much of it snaking through valleys and mountains populated by shepherds living in primitive conditions, their lives over-

shadowed by what they are told might be an imminent Indian invasion. Sometimes they hear mortars, shelling and rifle fire as soldiers aim across the valleys at each other from bunkers, hoping to kill an enemy soldier or two, as they have for years. There have been reports of Indian commandos crossing into Pakistani territory and attacking villages, which Delhi denies.

There is a danger of the two sides stumbling into war, but it does not seem to be coming yet, despite Pakistan's feverish beating of the war drums for domestic political reasons. The poor are being told they must become poorer to save their Islamic nation from Hindu aggression. They have thus been dancing in the streets.

Feudal landlords and the elite business classes are less joyful — their pockets risk being depleted by a collapse in domestic and international confidence in the economy. They know the warmongering is political rhetoric if it were more they would be building shelters or moving their families to London, regarded by many rich Pakistanis as second home. Only the illiterate poor, at the mercy of government-run television and radio news, think they may be honoured with the opportunity to die. This is not the mood in India, where jubilation over the bomb is fading as the cost begins to dawn. There is no talk of war in Delhi. The sound of tom-toms beating furiously in Islamabad are not being taken seriously — not yet, anyway.

President Tarar of Pakistan, in announcing a state of emergency, said that he was satisfied the nation's security was threatened by "war or external aggression". India's army chief, General V.P.



A child at Islamabad's Faisal mosque stands up for a good look as the men around him offer thanksgiving prayers for the successful nuclear tests

Malik, said there was "no warlike situation" on either side. Delhi's Defence Ministry called in defence attaches of embassies to deny Pakistani claims of planned Indian aggression. Officials called the allegations "disinformation". General Malik was not surprised that Pakistan had tested its nuclear devices in the wake of the Indian tests. "If there was any ambiguity earlier about their nuclear capabilities, that no longer exists. It's better this way."

There has been no official criticism of Pakistan: India says the Islamic state has every right to test nuclear devices. But there are fears that nuclear weapons will be under the control of the army chief — one of the three main centres of power, with the President and the Prime Minister — rather than civilians. Hardliners in the ISI, the military intelligence wing, exert a decisive influence over Kashmir policy and would doubtless favour using nuclear weapons in a battlefield crisis.

India, conversely, plans to establish a command and control structure that will leave the Government firmly in control. The Indian armed forces are strictly apolitical — unlike in Pakistan, where they are the ultimate authority. In India the decision to use

nuclear weapons is likely to rest with the Prime Minister, who will first have to complete mandatory consultations. Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistani Prime Minister, alarmed India by making clear that nuclear weapons might be used in response to either a nuclear or a conventional weapons threat. Pakistan will be prepared to use nuclear weapons to compensate for an overwhelming inferiority in conventional weapons. If war comes, it is highly likely to use nuclear.

Geneva: Muni Akram, Pakistan's envoy to the United Nations-backed Conference on Disarmament called yesterday for a global arms negotiating body to help to avert an all-out nuclear arms race in South Asia, and to stabilise the region. (Reuters)

Leading article, page 23

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EU plans talks on ways of blocking warhead build-up

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN ISLAMABAD AND MICHAEL BINTON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN announced yesterday that it was holding urgent talks with its European Union partners to see how to put maximum pressure on Pakistan as the country's Foreign Minister announced plans to start producing nuclear warheads.

Gohar Ayub Khan said Pakistan was a nuclear-producing state and would go for a serial production of missiles and nuclear weapons, adding: "If you have a missile of 900-mile range, no military man would like to equip it with conventional warheads."

Sir David Dain, the High Commissioner, left Pakistan within hours of his recall for consultations by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary. His immediate departure underlined Britain's anger at the tests. Mr Cook said that new trade limitations agreed this week against India would also be applied to Pakistan.

Britain's punitive steps came amid proposals for an emergency London meeting of the Group of Eight industrial nations, together with India and Pakistan, to try to prevent a nuclear arms race in South Asia. The proposal, put forward first by Japan, was considered by the Foreign Office said.

Pakistan's state of emergency, the first since 1990, was accompanied by a freeze on foreign exchange bank accounts to prevent a flight of capital. The announcement of American and Japanese cuts in aid has prompted panic withdrawals.

Total deposits in foreign exchange bank accounts are estimated at £7.4 billion; the withdrawal of even 10 per cent might trigger an economic collapse.

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ASIA ARMS CRISIS

West may disrupt missile race

Michael Evans reports on an expensive duel of technologies between the subcontinent's rivals

INDIA and Pakistan are now expected to pursue an aggressive industrial programme to produce an arsenal of ballistic missiles for their newly created nuclear warheads. However, having failed to prevent either country from carrying out nuclear tests, the leading nuclear powers may now be in a position to disrupt this next step in the South Asia arms race.

Developing nuclear warheads may have been relatively cheap, but creating a production line for intermediate-range ballistic missiles will be crippling, particularly to Pakistan's economy.

The challenge for the three Western nuclear powers - the United States, Britain and France - will be to ensure that neither Russia, which has helped India in the past, nor China, which has provided material support for Pakistan, will play a role in the future that could accelerate the arms race in South Asia.

Unlike India, which has the capability to develop indigenous missiles, Pakistan has had to take a pragmatic approach by seeking help from abroad and building missiles on licence.

China has vehemently denied supplying Pakistan with ballistic missile systems. But after Chinese M11 short-range missiles were shipped in crates to Pakistan, Washington effectively accused China of missile proliferation.

Beijing is not a signatory of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which is aimed at curbing ballistic missile proliferation, but after the dispute over the M11 systems it declared that it would abide by the terms of the agreement.

However, it is clear that Pakistan has relied in the past on China for its nuclear technology and it is suspected that the M11s were not the only complete ballistic missile systems to be imported clandestinely from the Chinese. North Korea has also supplied Paki-

stan with key components. India has been assisted by Russia in the past, although it denies any current co-operation, and has used Canadian-made reactors to produce plutonium for its nuclear bombs. However, it started developing its own domestic defence industry ten years before Pakistan and there is every reason to believe that it has the industrial capability to maintain a ballistic missile production line. Cost will be the only inhibitor.

If China is true to its word and is no longer breaching the Missile Technology Control Regime, Pakistan will find it difficult to match India's missile-production capability, unless it has continued links with North Korea, which has no allegiance to the MTCR guidelines.

Digby Waller, a defence economist at the London-

China has denied any hand in the Ghauri programme and the system is believed to be a derivative of the North Korean No Dong missile.

North Korea, however, has denied providing Pakistan with No Dong missiles. Earlier this month a senior diplomat at the North Korean Embassy in Islamabad said: "The reports that the test of the Ghauri missile was based on North Korean technology are totally baseless. Pakistan and North Korea have been enjoying very friendly ties for years... but we have not provided nuclear and missile technology to Pakistan."

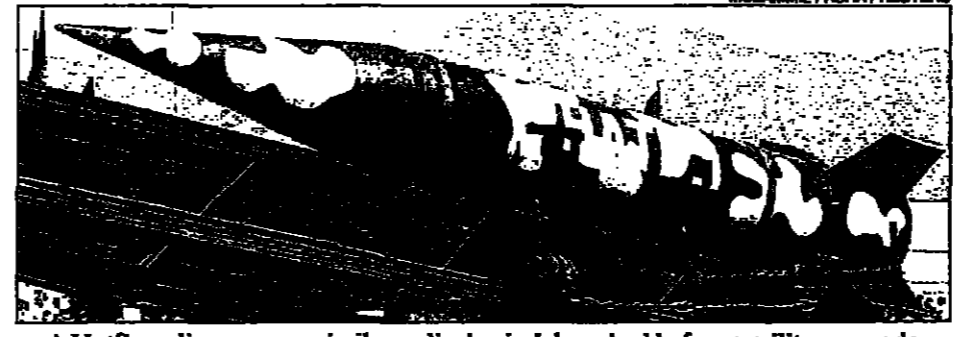
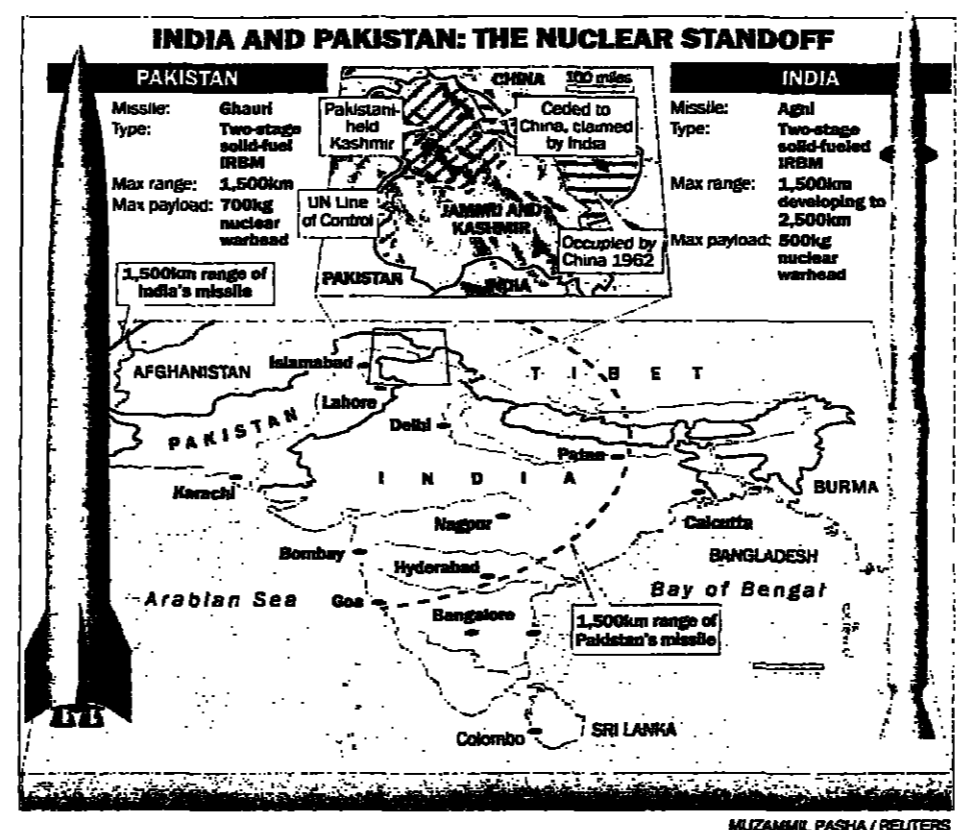
Nevertheless, Western intelligence services that in recent years have made counter-proliferation one of their priority areas will have to devote even more resources to monitoring the clandestine routes that clearly have been used in the past in the development of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme.

Both India and Pakistan already have well-developed short-range missile programmes. India has in service about 75 Prithvi missiles which have a range of 250 kilometres (156 miles), with conventional warheads. Pakistan has three short-range versions of the Hatf missile with ranges of between 100 kilometres (62 miles) and 800 kilometres (496 miles). There are 18 Hatf1s in service.

India is now in a position to continue its ballistic missile programme without outside help. Russia is signed up to the MTCR and should not be in a position to provide further assistance.

However, it is impossible to be sure whether some elements of the Russian nuclear missile industry are not secretly assisting the Indians, without the knowledge of President Yeltsin. Mr Waller said: "President Yeltsin can say his hands are clean, but there is no real control over the nuclear industry."

The Agni missile, a mobile



two-stage solid-fuel system which was flight-tested three times between 1989 and 1994, was shelved after intense international pressure. However, after the Pakistanis launched their Ghauri missile on April 6, the Indians reinstated the Agni programme as a priority. All the components were in place.

The Agni has been developed by India's state-owned Defence Research and Development Organisation and produced by Bharat Dynamics, both at Hyderabad.

Like the Ghauri, the Agni has a range of about 1,500 kilometres (937 miles), although the Indians are now extending the range to 2,500 kilometres (1,562 miles).

The three flight tests were successful, which means that the Indians will not need to carry out further technology tests in order to extend the range to 2,500 kilometres. However, the missile will have to be modified and then flight-tested to prove that it can fly over a longer range. The modified version is called the Surya missile.

The Ghauri, first fired from a mobile launcher, was flight-tested to a distance of just over 680 miles and the test was carried out entirely overland. It was admitted at the time by Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, Pakistan's top missile and nuclear scientist, that he had "consulted abroad" for the components for the guidance system.

The Ghauri, also a solid-fuel system, has been developed at the Pakistan aeronautical complex at Kamra, about 60 miles northwest of Islamabad, and produced by Pakistani ordnance factories. There is already a follow-on system to the Ghauri under development called the Ghaznavi which is reported to have a range of 2,000 kilometres (1,240 miles).

After the flight test of the Ghauri in April, which lasted nine minutes and 58 seconds, it was claimed to have been "100 per cent" successful. It was launched from an army firing range. One report said that the total weight of the missile was 16 tonnes with a fuel load of 14 tonnes.



WORLD IN BRIEF

Students seek to topple Mugabe

Harare: Zimbabwe riot police fired teargas and clubbed students yesterday to break up a protest against President Mugabe (Chris Chinaka writes). The students, who began demonstrating on Thursday, were demanding higher grants and an end to alleged corruption in the 18-year Government, saying they could drive the President, 74, out of power in the same way that a student-led campaign had forced Indonesia's President Suharto to resign this month.

Witnesses said Harare police charged into 2,000 college students, firing teargas, as they marched into the capital's main shopping mall from parliament. Bystanders and traders were also beaten by the police batons.

Klansman held for murder

Washington: Sam Bowers, right, a former Ku Klux Klan Imperial Wizard who was tried twice in the 1960s over a firebombing that killed a black civil rights activist, has been arrested in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, on charges that he masterminded the crime (Tom Rhodes writes). Mr Bowers, 73, was charged with murder and arson over the death of Vernon Dahmer in 1966.



Pledge on Briton's killers

Bangkok: The Khmer Rouge killers of Christopher Howes, the British mine clearance expert, will be rooted out and brought to justice, Derek Fatchett, the Foreign Office Minister, said here after receiving assurances from Hun Sen, the Cambodian Prime Minister (Andrew Drummond writes). Howes, from Bristol, was killed in Anglong Veng two days after his capture in March 1996.

Estrada victory ratified

Manila: Joseph Estrada, a college dropout and former film star, was proclaimed by Congress as the thirteenth President of the Philippines (Abby Tan writes). He takes over from President Ramos on June 30. José de Venecia, the House Speaker and government candidate, conceded defeat to Mr Estrada, who won 39.9 per cent of the vote compared with Mr de Venecia's 15.9 per cent.

Oldest zoo elephant dies

The world's oldest African elephant in captivity was announced dead yesterday at Basle Zoo in Switzerland (Helen Rumbelow writes). Keepers said Beira, 49, had been struck down by grief over the death of her mate of 30 years, Kenny. He died last week with breathing problems. Local firemen repeatedly tried to get Beira back on her feet, but zoo officials yesterday decided to put her down.

Drugs case turns to ashes

San Antonio: Michael Horne insisted the powdery substance police found in a plastic bag in his vehicle was the ashes of his cremated grandmother, but he was kept in jail for a month, unable to afford bail, after tests showed it was methamphetamine, an illegal drug. He lost his job, his vehicle, his home and his military reserve status. Further tests proved him right. He is suing for damages. (AP)

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Emperor's state visit 'not spoilt by demonstrations'

BY ALAN HAMILTON

EMPEROR Akihito of Japan ended his state visit to Britain yesterday with a series of meetings with botanists and geologists, and an insistence by his staff that the visit had not been spoilt by prisoner of war demonstrations.

As the Emperor visited the Linnean Society, a botanical institution, and later the research wing of London Zoo, and Empress Michiko toured the headquarters of the British Red Cross, both appeared relaxed and at ease, in contrast to the first day when they were met by a chorus of boing and whistling from war veterans in The Mall.

The Emperor will tour a farm in Oxfordshire today to see at first hand how commercial agriculture can be combined with wildlife conservation (Michael Hornsby writes). The private engagement was requested by the Emperor, a keen naturalist who plants and harvests rice every year in a paddy field in the grounds of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

Details of the excursion have been kept secret to try to avoid pursuit by angry veterans of Japanese prisoner-of-war camps who

have dogged the Emperor's footsteps during much of the public part of his visit to Britain. The Emperor will go around Wells Farm, a 163-acre smallholding growing wheat, barley and oilseed rape and supporting a small flock of sheep, near Little Milton, southeast of Oxford.

Martin Spray, director of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Nature Trust, which owns the farm, will act as a guide, with Sir Ghillelan Prance, the director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

considerable knowledge of marine biology. For the first time on his visit, he performed a brief impromptu public walkabout, shaking the hands of visitors and their children.

But the prisoners of war issue still reverberated yesterday, with a split emerging in the veterans' ranks. John Nunnely, a veteran of the Burma campaign who was wounded but not taken prisoner, strongly criticised the militant veterans, calling their protests "abominable" and "outrageous". Mr Nunnely is a member of the Burma Campaign Fellowship Group which promotes reconciliation and visits to the Far East.

Mr Nunnely was the only Burma campaign veteran at Tuesday night's state banquet for the Imperial couple at Buckingham Palace. Arthur Titherington, chairman of the Japan Labour Camp Survivors' Association and the prime mover behind the protests, has described Mr Nunnely's group as "freeloaders".

We have even seen people on British television this week debating the finer points of Japanese constitutional law.

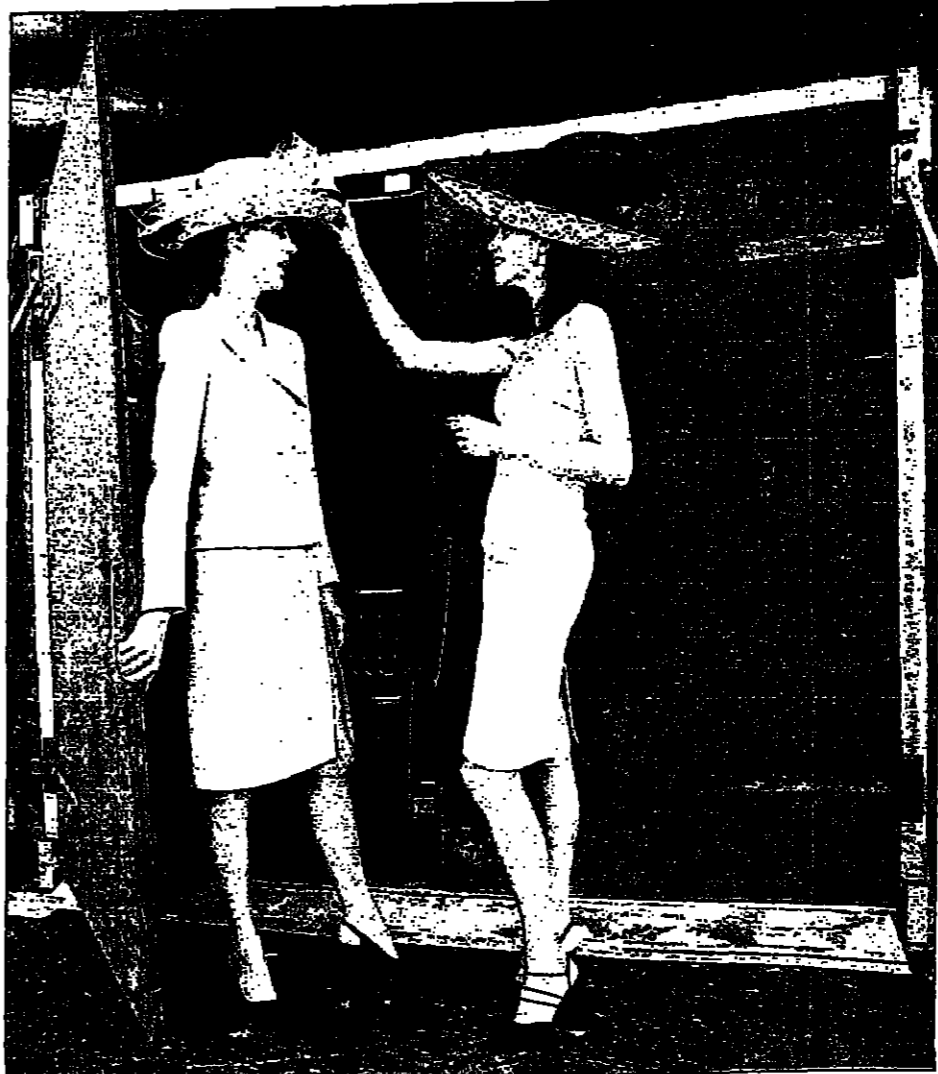
But the Japanese party was clearly surprised and disconcerted at the fact that the protests were larger, louder and more orchestrated than when Emperor Hirohito visited London only 26 years after the end of the war. They were also taken aback by the noise because the labour camp survivors had announced that they planned a silent protest.

The Japanese view was that the protests had been "dignified and orderly", with the exception of a flag-burning incident. The highlights for the Imperial couple had been the two state banquets, and their visit to Cardiff.

Buckingham Palace also regarded the visit as a success. "The problems over the demonstrations and the controversy over the award of the Garter were no worse than had been expected, but officials were annoyed that some newspapers, during the visit to Cardiff, had concentrated on a group of 30 veterans demon-

strating at the castle gates. "The Japanese were puzzled that the demonstrations were greater than in 1971, and slightly alarmed that they were so noisy," a senior palace source said. "But the veterans are better organised now, are older so more inclined to look back, and there has been a cultural change in the country; we are more litigious, and more insistent on apologies."

That the Emperor ended his visit on a relaxed note was shown as he emerged from London Zoo after touring its aquarium to enhance his own

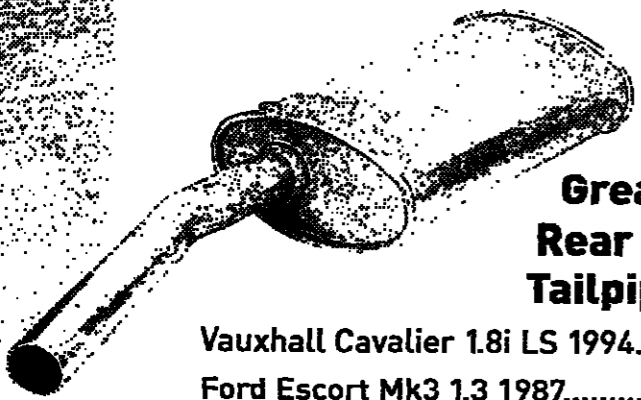


Models in Catherine Walker dresses bring together two of the passions of Diana, Princess of Wales — clothes and charities — at Oswestry in Shropshire last night.

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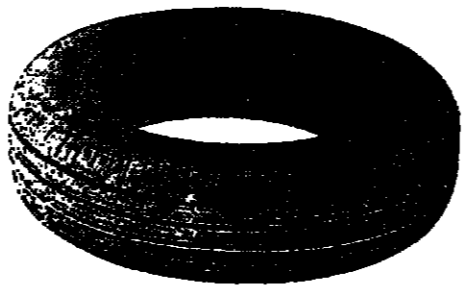
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Girl of 17 committed suicide on the M4

BY STEWART TENDLER

A TEENAGER who feared that she was about to lose her boyfriend killed herself by stepping in front of traffic on the M4.

Several drivers swerved to avoid Roshanee Bassi, 17, before she was run over by a coach. Yesterday a coroner recorded a verdict of suicide.

The inquest, in Swindon, was told that three weeks before her death in October she had suddenly walked out of her home. The day before she died she had to be dragged from traffic.

Her father, Jaginder Bassi, chairman of the Racial Equality Council in Swindon, described Roshanee as a loving and friendly girl but said she had had an intense relationship with her white 16-year-old boyfriend.

In a statement the boyfriend said that she had used emotional blackmail to keep them together. "She told me that she had left home for me and that if we broke up she would try to kill herself."

Army padre cleared of harassing soldier

BY ADAM FRESCO

AN ARMY chaplain was cleared yesterday of harassing a soldier and his wife, but still faces four charges of indecent assault against another soldier's wife.

Captain Richard Landall, 41, was acquitted on two counts of harassment after the court martial panel heard that Fusilier Jean Brazier, the soldier at the centre of the allegations, told a senior officer: "My wife and I weren't harassed."

The evidence that cleared the padre came from Fusilier Brazier's adjutant, Captain Andrew Rawding. Captain Rawling said that Fusilier Brazier had approached him early this week after giving evidence and told him that Captain Landall was a "lovely man".

Captain Rawding said: "He stated he was not harassed by the padre. He said the padre was a lovely man and both he and his wife considered the padre to be a lovely man. He used those words."

But Captain Rawling told the hearing that the soldier said his wife "did not consider that behaviour to be the behaviour of a padre".

The hearing was adjourned until Monday.

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Witch guide to the mystic East

The occult has made a lucrative comeback after communism's collapse, writes Roger Boyes

DOUBLE DOUBLE, wit and trouble: witches are back in Central and Eastern Europe, cursing unsympathetic bosses, bringing back boyfriends, curing impotence and, for this is the new capitalist era, making good money.

Little wonder the Pope has ordered an encyclical against superstition. The collapse of communism opened the floodgates for New Age practitioners, fortune-tellers, aromatherapists, rebirthers, and every variant of sect or cult. Hungary has the first UFO landing site, a useful asset when the country eventually joins Nato.

Witches, too, have surfaced. Tens of thousands practise under various guises. Halina Chmielewska is organising an "esoteric" congress in Poznan — site of one of Europe's last witch burnings in 1793 — and has invited specialists in black, white and green magic, interpreters of the mystic Kabbala and Tarot, spell writers and potion mixers. "Don't use the word witch!" she yells down the telephone from Poznan. "We all have a gift. I've known about mine since I was 12 when I realised my grandmother had second sight."

Witches do not, on the whole, like to be called witches. "This is a serious matter and should not be trivialised — I studied parapsychology in Lodz." Nobody in Hungary is afraid of calling a witch a witch. The country, which has an ancient tradition of shamanism, now has 10,000 members of the National Witches' Association. The organisation began in 1986 during the communist era and was a semi-underground grouping. Witches advertised themselves as "personal development therapists", but the end of communism saw a sudden surfacing of interest in the occult, the supernatural and the extraterrestrial.

The Witches' Association, led by white witch Jozsef Muszaros, is not exactly an exclusive organisation. One has to be over 18 and sign a declaration that contains, among other things, a commitment to religious freedom and a love of nature. The association does not have rigorous quality standards — you take your chances with Budapest fortune-tellers — but it lobbies hard for a privileged tax status as a religious group. A good Hungarian witch can earn well. Mirella Majoros, one of several Buda-



Jozsef Muszaros, leader of Hungary's National Witches' Association, is part of a growing trade in superstition. Even manicurists like Judit, right, can make a living reading fortunes from clients' nails



pest practitioners of white magic to advertise in the specialist press, can charge anything between £15 and £80 for consultations and has 20 steady clients. Since the average monthly wage in Hungary is about £120 that makes Mirella a rather rich witch. No surprise that even manicurists are turning to black and white magic.

Apart from a Germanic tradition that goes back to the Middle Ages — continued by Heinrich Himmler, whose SS *H-Sonderkommando* trawled the occupied East for spells and occult groups — British sorcery is highly esteemed. Vivienne Crowley was guest of honour at the official launch of the Hungarian Witches' Association in 1991 — a chilly springtime ceremony on the shores of Lake Balaton. One concession made by modern witchcraft is that naked black-magic orgies are increasingly scheduled for warmer summer nights. Too many East European witches were developing pneumonia after spring initiation rites.

The caution of occultists over being labelled witches is understandable. A cleaning lady has just been arrested in a remote village in northeast Romania after being discovered "burning candles on a stone" during office hours in



the village hall. The woman was cursing village leaders and the mayor is pressing charges. The stone is to be introduced as evidence, the broom (there really was one) has been confiscated, and the woman sacked.

Witch-hunting, however, does not seem to be on the agenda, although in Poland there are fears that the papal encyclical could stir up sentiment in rural Catholic communities. In Poland, the zealous Catholic broadcasting station, Radio Marija, regularly blasts what it describes as the European Antichrist and the demonic attempts of the European Commission to corrupt Polish youth. Millions

of people listen to these often rabid broadcasts. As one Polish journalist only half-jokingly pointed out, it would not take much for the station to declare the British or German Ambassador to be a practitioner of the black arts.

The hapless Romanian cleaning lady will probably be charged with causing a fire hazard and insulting the authorities. As a case in Germany recently showed, it is almost impossible to confine a suspected witch within a modern legal corset. Ulla von Bernus, a self-proclaimed witch, was investigated after offering to rid women of unwanted husbands; her spells, she promised, could

force boring spouses to crash against trees or be killed by falling roof tiles. But the prosecutor found her pledges were an act of harmless madness and could not be seen as conspiracy to murder. There was a clear precedent: a German court in 1900 cleared three women of murderous witchcraft.

The prosecutor tried a different tack. A straggled mistress who paid the witch DM3,000 (£1,040) to lure back her boyfriend took Frau von Bernus to court. The boyfriend refused to leave his wife, despite the spells, and the mistress wanted her money back. But the judge ruled that emotions cannot be controlled by magic. The contract was never valid and there was no fraud case to be answered. Witch-hunting raged for

three centuries, from the papal bull of 1484 to the end of the 18th century. The number of witches killed is disputed — anywhere between 300,000 and three million. It was the Germans' attempt to codify witch-hunting — in the *Malleus Maleficarum* — that most influenced the climate in the East.

In Transylvania, in Prussian Poland, in Bohemia, women who lived alone, dispensed herbal medicines, and behaved unusually or defiantly were targeted. Centuries later, in postwar communism, secret policemen consciously revived political witch-hunting, acting as irrationally and as brutally as their 17th-century forebears in extracting false confessions.

Professor Norman Davies has noted how witchcraft and superstition came to a head in Europe at a time when "humanism and the scientific revolution was supposedly working in the opposite direction". A similar paradox seems to hold for East Europe today.

The region is modernising rapidly. Witches like Majoros have their Tarot cards on a computer screen; the logic of European integration and global economies seems to need a counterpart in the worship of the occult.

Established and organised religion is losing influence even in Catholic Poland, where the Church has been on the losing end of a number of fierce rows about abortion and religious education.

Witches — or at least those who function as fortune-tellers — are acting as relationship

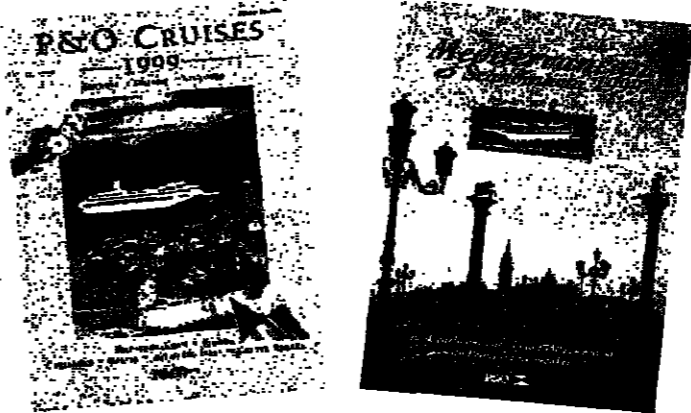
advisers at a time when families in East Europe are under financial and social strain. The advice is sound but usually banal and expensive. Call Josefina on a 24-hour Polish hotline — she advertises along with dozens of other witches in the back of occult magazines — and she will advise you to make your errant girlfriend jealous by taking out her best friend. She delivers this guidance after a long study of birth dates. This is pay-by-the-minute witchcraft and of limited value.

But plainly people are not receiving advice about relationships from any other quarter. The village sages have died, grandmothers have careers, priests are unwilling to get down to the nitty-gritty, and psychotherapists are even pricier than witches.

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Danish 'yes' gives mixed message on expansion

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN COPENHAGEN

DENMARK'S "yes" to the Treaty of Amsterdam prompted relief across the European Union and its would-be members in the East yesterday, but the strong minority for rejection in Thursday's referendum was seen as a warning against future steps to deeper union.

Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, joined a chorus of congratulations to Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the Prime Minister, for marshalling a 55.1 per cent vote in favour of the successor to the Maastricht treaty.

The vote clears the way to enactment of the treaty by early next year because ratification has been granted or is imminent in Britain and the 13 other states. A Danish "no" would have sparked an EU crisis, as did the country's initial rejection of Maastricht in 1992.

Delight was palpable yesterday in the capitals of the five Central European states that are due to join the EU in the next decade. A Danish block on the treaty, which paves the way for EU enlargement, could have delayed the whole project.

However, a lesson for the EU's future was being drawn from the 44.9 per cent of Danish voters who rejected the treaty. One Copenhagen newspaper summed up the mood of resistance: "It is remarkable that, despite the massive bombardment to convince Danes to vote 'yes', nearly half the electorate rebelled against the pro-European propaganda."

Release the balls for a new House of Lords

Think-tank turns to Ancient Greece for reform, writes Nicholas Wood

MEMBERS of a "people's House of Lords should be chosen by a political version of the National Lottery, according to a report to be published next week by an influential independent think-tank.

The paper from Demos, which has close links with Downing Street, urges Tony Blair to return to the cradle of democracy in Ancient Greece for a solution to one of the toughest problems confronting his Government.

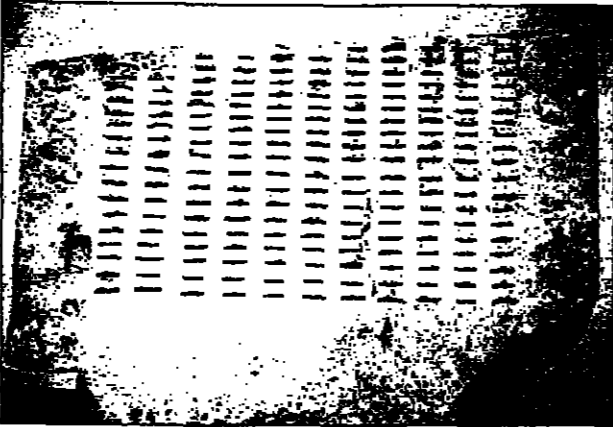
Between 507BC and about 300BC, Athens was ruled in part by a jury of 201 citizens selected randomly by a hand-powered prototype for today's computerised lottery machines, Lancelot, Guinevere and Arthur.

Members of 11 of the 12 tribes of the city-state slotted their names into a kleroterion (from the Greek word *kleos* for draw), a crank was turned and names were chosen or rejected by the appearance of white or black balls. The twelfth tribe acted as scrutineers, underlining the Greek anxiety about electoral malpractice.

The Demos paper, co-written by the constitutional campaigner Anthony Barnett, says a similar approach could create a democratic second chamber that would pose no threat to the authority of the Commons. Mr Barnett said he had been inspired to put forward his idea after viewing the machine used by the Athenians to choose their rulers at an exhibition in Edinburgh in 1993.

The Prime Minister is committed to abolishing hereditary peers, but has so far failed to produce detailed proposals. A seven-strong Cabinet committee, headed by Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, is trying to break the deadlock.

Under his plan, Mr Barnett, a former director of Charter 88, the pressure group behind current constitutional changes, said that regional



The kleroterion picked 201 citizens at random

shortlists of 1,000 people would be drawn up randomly. The names of those prepared to serve at Westminster would go forward for final selection in a computerised draw. These "peers in Parliament" would number about 300 and would form a majority in the Upper House. They would work alongside life peers organised on traditional party lines, and would be paid at least as much as an MP — £45,066 a year.

Unlike jury service, people would be able to refuse to take part. Those unable to read English would be disqualified but offered free training for future service.

The powers of a reformed Lords would be similar to those of the existing body, which concentrates on revising and scrutinising Bills originating in the Commons. But under the Demos plan, the upper House would be able to insist that new laws were written in plain English and to reject deeply flawed legislation, such as the poll tax.

"Peers" could be selected for about a year, and could spend most of their time examining one Bill. Alternatively, they could be chosen for a four-year term, so becoming part of the political class.

Mr Barnett and his co-

author, Peter Cary, a journalist, say that their proposals are in keeping with other ideas, such as focus groups and citizen's juries in local government, aimed at revitalising democracy and giving people a direct say in how they are

governed. They claim that an elected second chamber, favoured by many reformers, would be "potentially destructive" because it would set a strengthened Lords against the Commons, with the war being fought on party lines.

Mr Barnett denied that his proposals were eccentric or unworkable, pointing out that they were already used in the selection of juries. "The irony is that the present leader of Conservative peers, Lord Cranborne, justified keeping hereditary peers on the ground that they were a random selection because they were not politicians. Oddly enough, these ideas represent a kind of continuity."

"The question is, do you trust people? Do you think juries are a crackpot idea? They are the principle of consent for British justice."

Leading article, page 23



Anthony Barnett, shoulder to shoulder with Pericles, the Athenian statesman and democratic leader

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Scots skirmish heralds war for Labour's heart

By MICHAEL GOVE

IT IS a resignation that would, at other times, have gone unnoticed outside a tiny circle. But it has ramifications that reach the top of the Labour Party.

Paul McKinney, the talented spin-doctor appointed two months ago to lead Labour's campaign for the Scottish parliament has left office suddenly citing "personal reasons". And behind his resignation rumbles a battle for the heart of Labour.

Great powers that are not ready for big battles tend to fight proxy wars, using their satellites. So, during the Cold War, the US and the Soviet Union squared off against each other in Afghanistan and Africa. In British politics proxy battles between big beasts have often been fought first in Scotland.

The struggle for the soul of the Tory party in Margaret Thatcher's last years was initially fought north of the border between the centrist Malcolm Rifkind and the radical Michael Forsyth. Now, another struggle is being fought out in Scotland with the brooding figure of Gordon Brown at its centre.

His ambition to lead Labour has already seen skirmishing between his partisans and those close to Peter Mandelson who believe that Mr Brown does not always act in the Prime Minister's interests.

There have been murmurings recently that Mr Brown is over-anxious to consolidate and extend his power base. Those concerns found vigorous expression after the publication of a biography of the Chancellor, which claimed that he still nursed resentment at being overtaken for the leadership by Tony Blair.

Since then, the Chancellor's generosity in spending thousands of pounds of his own money to entertain Labour movement activists has raised eyebrows in Westminster. But it is in Scotland that the man who his enemies believe

with leading the fightback against a resurgent Scottish National Party.

Recent polls suggest that the SNP would be the biggest party in the Edinburgh parliament to be elected next year. To forestall the nationalist rise, Mr Brown was in Scotland this week, accompanied by stories that his comprehensive spending review would lead to a £2 billion bonanza for the Scottish Office. His generosity has been complemented by vigorous attacks on the SNP from other ministers. It is, however, the Chancellor's promise of jam tomorrow that has attracted the most interest - not all of it favourable.

English Blairites are concerned that potential savings from the Defence, Social Security and Foreign Office budgets should go to Scotland, which they already consider over-subsidised. Some believe that Mr Brown is looking too vigorously after his own. The Chancellor has installed his own ally from his native Fife, Alex Rowley, to run the Scottish Labour Party and had placed his former aide, Mr McKinney, as the communications supremo. The suspicion that Mr Brown is "Scotland's real governor-general" has been aired by enemies. And they fear that he wants to use Scotland as a springboard to greater things.

But it has not all been plain sailing. Another Brown ally, the Scottish Office adviser Murray Elder, has been vetoed as an assembly candidate. And Brownites believe that it was a shot across their man's bow from internal enemies. Now, with Mr McKinney's resignation, and rumours of personal sniping having forced him to quit, clouds are gathering. Next week the allegations of sleaze that followed the suicide of the Labour MP Gordon McMaster will be investigated by the party's national executive. The witches' brew in Mac-

At the centre of the battle is the brooding figure of Gordon Brown

Photo: Popperfoto/Reuters

Spice Girls split may be gingered-up stunt

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

IT IS a mystery worthy of that other famous five. Did Posh, Sporty, Scary, Baby and Ginger — especially Ginger — go mad in Finland?

The hot rumours, counter rumours, speculation and exclusive (and not so exclusive) claims are that the Spice Girls have split. Or is it all just a publicity stunt?

If it is a publicity stunt it is a rum one. The facts are these: the five left Helsinki on Wednesday morning to fly back to England. But only four of them appeared on the evening's midweek lottery show. And again the five had become four when they took the stage in Oslo on Thursday. Last night the quartet performed the last date of their European tour before a week's break ahead of a 40-date American tour.

The missing link is Ginger, also known as Geri Halliwell: the brassy, busy flame-haired singer regarded as the unofficial leader of the group that has had six No 1 hits and was the first British group to reach



Geri Halliwell: the unofficial leader of the gang

No 1 in the United States with its first album. Has she walked out? And if so, does that mean the end of the Spice Girls?

Last night the band's publicists seemed to have little idea about what was going on and denied one report that she would be joining the band for their trip to America.

The first statements said she had a stomach bug. But yesterday the publicists

claimed they were in the dark. The comment of Scary Spice (Mel Brown) to a news crew — "I think the Spice Girls will always remain friends" — hardly settled the matter.

"I know nothing. I don't know where Geri is. I know she was ill," a spokeswoman said, before adding, helpfully: "I know that tonight is the last night of the European tour. And I know that the video of *Spice World: the Movie* has

sold 220,000 copies since it went on sale this week." If the group is such a successful commodity, such ignorance about their togetherness seems a little careless.

Part of the problem is that since they sacked Simon Fuller, their manager, last November, the Spice Girls have controlled their own affairs. "The Spice Girls manage themselves. They literally do, it's up to them," the spokeswoman said.

The girls were reported to have been arguing on the way back from Helsinki and Halliwell then stormed off to her home in Hertfordshire. One reason for the falling out might have been a meeting Halliwell was said to have had with fellow redhead Chris Evans about possible television projects. With millions in the bank, it has been suggested, she might have decided that now was the time to go it alone.

Certainly, all has not been sweetness in Spice World of late. After they sacked Mr Fuller, they endured an embarrassing episode in Barcelona when they were booted off the stage. But the welter of reports of their imminent demise proved unfounded. Indeed they turned the sacking into massive publicity about the potency of their brand of "girl power". They beat the Teletubbies to top the Christmas charts and launched a triumphant European tour.



Still on song: Mel Brown, Emma Bunton, Victoria Adams and Mel Chisholm

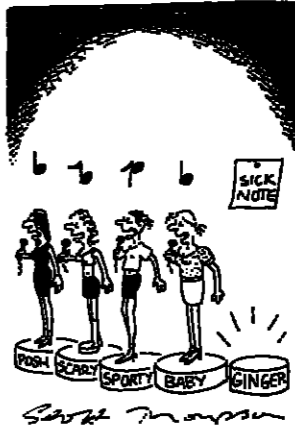
Halliwell, who was a cleaner, a topless model and a gameshow hostess on Turkish television before she joined the group, appeared to

be the brash, toughest Spice Girl, confident and in control. At press conferences she led the way and would terminate proceedings when she believed the time was right.

So if she has been thinking of quitting, the critical question is whether the others can survive without her. In truth, there is no need to believe that they can't if they want to. There is plenty of willfulness among the rest of the group and Victoria Adams, aka Posh Spice, recently admitted

that she was the driving force behind the sacking of Mr Fuller, not Halliwell as was popularly believed.

The history of pop is littered with burnt-out bands who split after blazing brightly and briefly. But then for every early demise one can think of a gang of dinosaurs who simply replace those who fall by the wayside. Indeed, in one of the band's most recent interviews, Halliwell said that she thought the band would go on for ever, "like the Rolling Stones".



Portillo takes TV odyssey to Tory abyss

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL PORTILLO has travelled to one of the most notorious council estates in Britain as part of his crusade to try to regenerate the Conservative Party's intellectual appeal.

The visit forms part of *In Search of Conservatism*, a three-part Channel 4 documentary that will coincide with the Tory party conference in Bournemouth. The series, made by Blakeway Productions, will confirm his status as the lost leader of the Tory Right just as Mr Hague is attempting to rally the Tory faithful.

The televised odyssey took Mr Portillo, who has already urged the Tories to be more tolerant, into the heart of the Gipton housing estate in Leeds, which is regularly headlined "The Worst in Britain". Among those he met were single mothers who were once the *bête noire* of the Tory Right.

The first programme, *Facing the Abyss*, aims to come to terms with the reasons why the Tories suffered such a

catastrophic defeat at the general election. Mr Portillo will also bare his own feelings at the humiliation of losing his Enfield Southgate seat.

Friends said Mr Portillo's visit to Leeds was not part of a campaign to reinvent himself but to discover how the Conservatives lost the trust of their working-class supporters and to try to find solutions.

The second programme will focus on the need for a "big idea" to revive the Tories' appeal. The third, and potentially most explosive programme, will concentrate on the vexed issue of Europe. It will face up to the schism in the Tory party over the single currency. It will argue that Mr Hague should build on his recent Fontainebleau speech and demonstrate an increasingly headline approach to relations with Brussels.

Guests on the programmes include Mr Hague, Chris Patten, Lord Tebbit, Kenneth Clarke and Kelvin MacKenzie, former Editor of *The Sun*, which deserted the Tories at the election. Peter Mandelson, an architect of new Labour, will also put in an appearance.

Work will continue on the series through the summer. Hugh Bygon-Webb, the producer, said: "It will be part fly-on-the-wall following Michael Portillo around the country in his quest for Conservatism. But it will conclude with a lot of interviews and Michael's own thoughts on why and where they went wrong and how they move forward."

"It is nothing to do with Michael Portillo's political rehabilitation. It is part of a genuine attempt to push the debate on policy forward."



Portillo: talks to single mothers on Leeds estate

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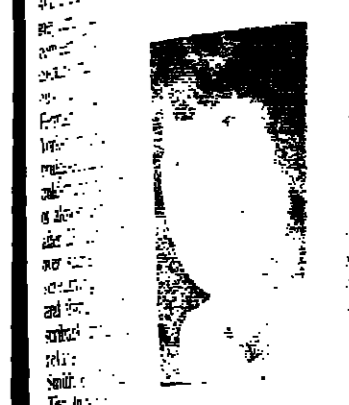
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VALERIE GROVE MEETS THE MEN BEHIND THE FILM CUTS

What the censors saw

Potentially, The Censor's Cuts, certificate 18, is the hottest show in town. Yet only 15 people turned up to see it in Belfast, and 35 in Glasgow. When the roadshow rolled into Birmingham on Wednesday, it drew the largest audience yet: 150 citizens. It remains to be seen how many will turn out for it in London next week. The show is on the road because James Ferman, the outgoing director of the British Board of Film Classification, and Andreas Whitam Smith, the board's new chairman, decided to show Joe Public how and why films are graded. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has said he wants the board to be more accountable and the people to have a voice. The audience in Birmingham were predictably varied: Mary Whitehouse types who have not ventured into a cinema for years; sex video retailers protesting that their customers have to go to Amsterdam to get the hard stuff they cannot get here; and all shades of how to snort coke or shoot heroin. "We try to show as little as possible of the needle going into the skin, because we know many addicts are fascinated by seeing the drug moving along the vein, mixing with blood. "A video," Ferman said, "is the best teaching medium ever invented." It is a slow-motion instructional manual for the criminal young, giving detailed techniques for stealing cars, breaking into buildings, stripping guns. American films blithely show children being taught martial arts with knives and how to deliver a lethal blow to the front of the neck. Ferman showed a montage of carnage with Bruce Willis, Bruce Lee and Sylvester Stallone. "Most young people don't copy violent activities but those who do include the most violent young people in Britain," he said. "What do we do when the most popular film stars in the world are also the most brutal?" The fact that children love something doesn't mean they ought to be allowed to watch it, a commonsense woman said. "Are you legalising violence?" an Asian man asked, to which Ferman replied equably: "You can't take all violence out of drama." A magistrate spoke up: "Many offenders admit they copy the idea of breaking into cars from television. Our jails are the most overcrowded in Europe. Britain pays a heavy price for some of the stuff coming across the ocean. Please take a robust stance, don't pander to the money men." Ferman disclosed that the money men are always striking deals with the board over cuts, taking out a

few grim seconds in order to get a 15 rating. The American opening scene of Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves - amputation of a hand, loud screams - was cut for the sake of a PG rating, and it became the year's most popular film in Britain. Eraser flopped in the cinema with an 18 rating, so "Warner Bros cut it themselves, we gave them a 15 and it was the most popular video ever. The company were delighted." Hollywood does not give a damn about social responsibility: Ferman showed us a scene from a new American children's movie, Rocket Man Boy, in which a boy climbs into a washing machine for a spin. Ferman cut it, but the Americans thought it was fine. And while the British cut violence, the Americans cut sex. A man from the Mrs Whitehouse brigade challenged Whitam Smith about Lolita. "The book is on school reading lists," he replied. The only question was, did the film make it as plain as the book does that the relationship is destructive, evil and a social taboo? His board decided that it did. After violence and drugs it was a relief, Ferman said, to turn to sex. "Where people are at least being nice to each other." We saw Kylie Minogue's bra removed in The Delinquents. We lingered over Diana Quick's nipples in Brideshead Revisited ("very little physical detail," Ferman said approvingly, "but a lot of tenderness") and watched Richard Gere and Debra Winger rolling about. Finally, Ferman gave us one uncut version of a sex scene (Highlander 3) which, when cut, became a 15. "And that's the only 18 sex scene I'm going to show you," he said. "But here is a montage which some of you may find painful, so close your eyes or turn away." This followed Jodie Foster's rape in The Accused and some loathsome sexual violence, including a Japanese cartoon: squeaky-voiced Barbie doll pinioned to a swastika by gloating attackers. "Oh! don't let me lose my panties!" Ferman said: "It is often difficult to remember that a film is for entertainment." The public is an impossible constituency, with no consensus in the freedom versus responsibility debate. And film critics will never love the BBFC. As Ferman said, his successor will need a flak jacket. Whitam Smith regards his weekly visits to the Soho Square viewing room as "like going to the dentist." Classifying films is "the hardest decision-making I've had to do in my life. Running a newspaper does not compare. I'm overpaid that we have to say, on behalf of the entire nation, 'Thou shalt not watch this.'" The next show, free and open to all, is on Tuesday at the Royal Commonwealth Institute at 7pm.



An editing suite at the board of classification, where cuts to films and videos deemed necessary by the censors are made

Bomb plot comes within an atom of sense

THEATRE Copenhagen Cottesloe

What is a "critical mass"? What's meant by "going critical"? As Michael Frayn's new piece makes evident, both are key concepts if you are discussing the Bomb. A critical mass is also a cluster of reviewers trying to twig the meaning of cyclotrons, mesons, photons, complimentary and the other matters invoked in Copenhagen, and going critical is the desperate realisation on their part that, despite the explanations in both play and programme, they don't quite do so. No doubt of it, Copenhagen is a challenge to those of us whose physics stops short of changing light bulbs, but it also brims with intellectual excitement. I found it hard going at times, but exhilarating at others. How often does the theatre deal with science at all, let alone with the life-or-death matters raised by the meeting of the German physicist Werner Heisenberg, then engaged on nuclear research for Speer, and Niels Bohr, his Danish mentor, in the occupied Copenhagen of 1941? This encounter actually occurred, though nobody knows what was said or why it caused a breach between men who were like father and son. Frayn's conceit is to set the play in a frosty Purgatory, where the meeting can be imaginatively re-enacted and its prehistory, aftermath and implications debated. It doesn't sound too dramatic, and, with some spectators sitting in institutional chairs at the back of the theatre, a lecture-hall feel is not always avoided. Yet Michael Blakemore's direction bangs energetically along, and Matthew Marsh's earnest Heisenberg, David Burke's genial Bohr and Sara Kestelman's spiky, cynical Mme Bohr do plenty to fill a small stage with human confusion, worry and pain. At the play's centre there is, after all, a conundrum that penetrates to these people's viscera. Why did Heisenberg seek the meeting and, if Frayn is to be believed, make the hitherto sceptical Bohr aware that fission could lead to the A-bomb? To impress him, get him to warn the Allies, recruit him, or what? Explanation after explanation surfaces, leaving Heisenberg looking variously like an opportunist, an incompetent, and a patriotic German who nevertheless decided to sabotage his own programme, keep the Bomb from Hitler and maybe save the planet. Frayn's own belief seems to be that the inventor of uncertainty theory is himself like a particle in quantum physics: here, there, everywhere, nowhere, and not to be defined by anyone, including himself. It is the proper conclusion both for a dramatist whose long-time theme has been the complexity and inscrutability of the species - and for a bold, meaty play. BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

INS AND OUTS OF THE CUTTING ROOM

- SCENES CENSORED CUT Highlander 3: sex scenes with lower-body shots Showgirls: woman thrown on to bed and hit Japanese cartoon: woman menaced, clothes ripped off, sadistic humiliation Eraser: violence, imitable combat techniques Terminator 2: violent scene of stabbing, lethal blows Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves: amputation, screams Trainspotting: detail of injecting heroin Rocket Man Boy: child locked itself in washing machine Unarmoured SAS videos: how to pick car locks Rambo III: horses fatally trip-wired SCENES APPROVED The Accused: gang rape in "a serious film about rape" The Delinquents: underage sex, but tender Kramer vs Kramer: female nudity, but in comic context An Officer and a Gentleman: sex scene given 15 rating

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*Source TGI Oct 96 - Sept 97

Patriotism without prejudice

The English need a healthy pride in their identity, says Ann Leslie

In my local inner-city market I asked a group of white teenagers loitering outside the "office" whether they felt English or British? "English, of course," I'm proud to be English!" replied one youth, his ears and nostrils pierced with large amounts of ironmongery. "I'm not British. I'm English!" Why? "Dunno, really. Just the way I am." But one of his mates butted in with: "English, British, what's the difference? I'm proud of being English, cos it's the same thing, innit?"

Tito tried to create a "Yugoslav" identity out of that country's disparate Slav parts, Yugoslavia fell apart soon after his death in an orgy of ethnic hatred and revenge. A sense of national identity, a knowledge of who you are and where you come from, seems to be essential for the psychic health of any society. Just as adopted children, however happy with their adoptive parents, long to know about their roots, people who have no pride in their collective past will not be able to deal with the present or the future with unaggressive self-confidence. Lacking a sense of what being English now consists of, the former boss nation is far more likely to express its sense of loss through hatred of others.

Er, try saying that in Galashiels, mate. Try saying it in the Welsh-speaking parts of Wales, or in republican areas of Belfast. But what does being English mean? Most people today would echo the market youth: "Dunno really..." The English have tended to use the terms English and British synonymously. We were the boss nation, the dominant culture, and the Celtic fringes were merely colourful add-ons to the prevailing English, sorry, British way of life.

That is why I fear the rise of English nationalism. If the English begin to feel hard done by — why, for example, are the Scots getting much higher subsidies from the State than the English? Why are ethnic minorities allowed to criticise the English but if we reply in kind we're being racist? — their sense of grievance may turn out to be very dangerous.

These fringes had charming accents and were good at things like making porridge, booze and male voice choirs, but Celtic nationalism itself — a sense of belonging to a separate "race" — was regarded as somewhat childish.

To my mind, the only way to avoid this danger is to help the English — especially the young English — like the tattooed and ear-ringed youths in my market — to appreciate that one can be proud of English history, culture and inventiveness without being arrogant or xenophobic. Multicultural education must not be used as an excuse to decry everything English in order to build up the self-esteem of incomers, or to assuage a sense of post-imperial guilt.

Once, to be English was to win the lottery of life

On a par with all those tedious Yorkshiremen who say, "I'm a Yorkshireman and proud of it!", Celtic nationalism was regarded as the sort of bombast you get from people with a rather deserved inferiority complex.

We felt (in so far as we thought about it at all, which was scarcely ever) that to be born English was to have won the first prize in the lottery of life. In fact, we were so convinced that ours was the dominant culture that we scarcely bothered to talk of "Englishness" itself.

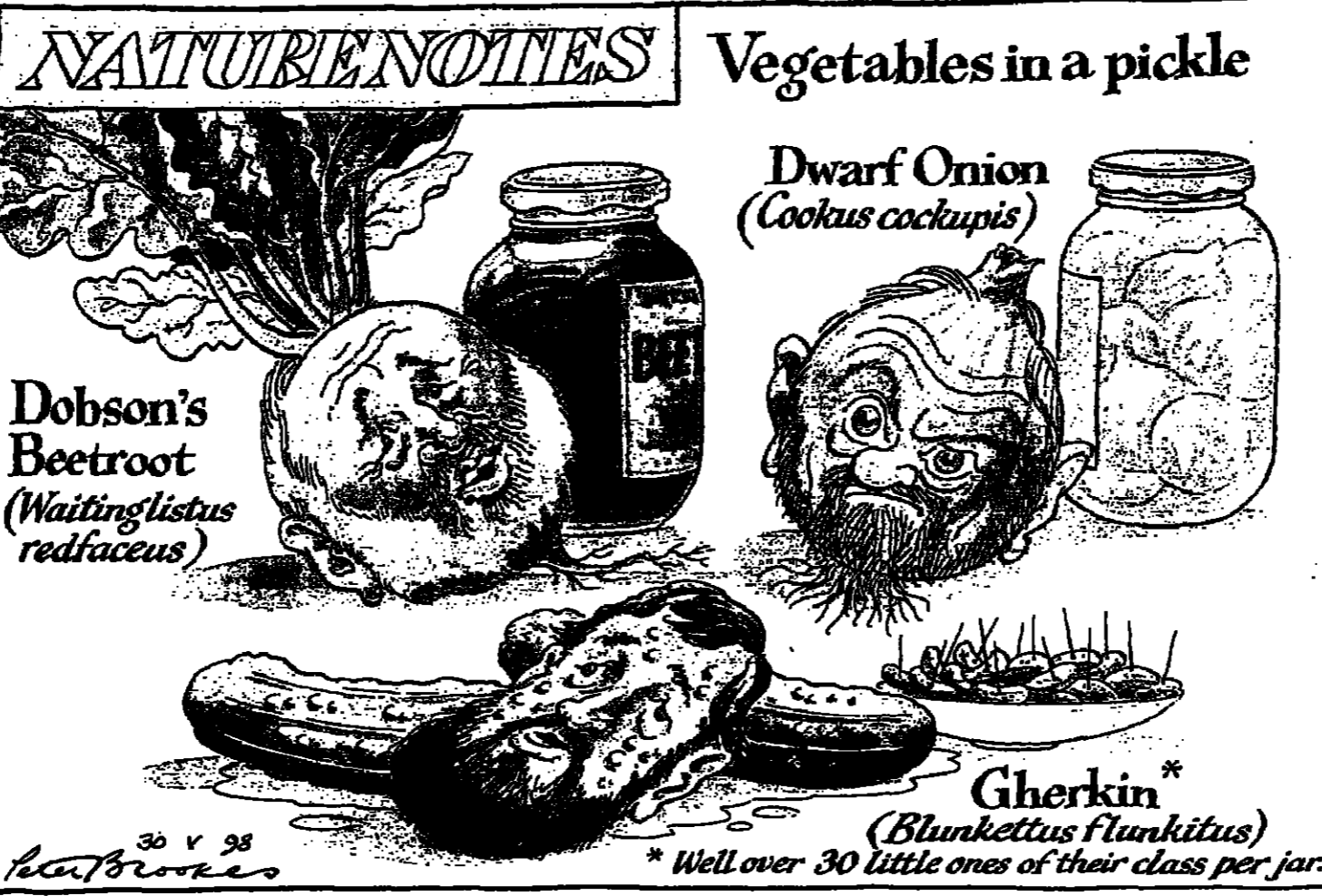
But things have changed. The English have woken up to the fact that the Scots and the Welsh increasingly call themselves "nations", not regions, as we have always called them. Well, if Scotland is a nation, and Wales is a nation and Ireland is a nation, what is England? The English, having been complacently boss nation for so long — first over all the other Britons, and secondly over much of the world — do not know what they are any more.

English pride must not be allowed to become the sole province of a tattooed, snarling "Gotcha" culture. But if liberal opinion continues to deride English achievements, and constantly demands *mea culpas* for our past, then a dominant "Gotcha" culture is what we will get, at huge cost to us all.

It is deeply depressing to learn from a recent *Sunday Times* survey that a group of teenagers who declared themselves proud to be English could not think of any English achievement other than *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders* and the national football team. Before it is too late for our multicultural inner cities, we must give English youth something valid to be proud of, to focus its longing for a sense of national identity.

On Diana's death last year, the columns of this and other newspapers were filled with suggestions more fitting to a banana republic. Heathrow should be renamed after her. The Dome should be the Diana Dome. The M25 should be "Dianaway". There should be a Diana Prom, Diana pizzas, the Diana Mall, HMS Diana, the Diana "affordable accommodation for the homeless". Streets should be renamed the "Avenue of the 31st of

Does this matter? I fear it does, especially in an increasingly globalised world. Globalisation does not lead to an ironing-out of national characteristics: it leads to a stronger desire than ever to huddle together for safety. If that instinct is denied or repressed, it will reappear — not as a healthy pride in one's national and cultural identity — but as something poisonous, xenophobic, whining and aggressive. There is a salutary example. No matter how hard



Monumental mistake

Diana's fame was only accidental. If we commemorate her in haste, we will repent at leisure, argues Simon Jenkins

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August". An annual Bank Holiday should be declared (are there any days left?).

The simultaneous death of Mother Teresa was met by her followers with more dignity. Faced with demands for a "fast-track canonisation", the Vatican told people simply to wait. "These things should take years," said a spokesman. "Sainthood is something that grows over time."

How did Mr Brown fall for this one? The Committee on the Diana Memorial was an argument waiting to happen. The smart money says Mr Blair knew exactly what he was about, but surely Mr Brown is no fool. He now finds himself hunkered down in full battledress while artillery roars overhead between the Spencers, the residents of Kensington & Chelsea, the Diana groupies and the parks and gardens lobby. If I were Mr Brown, I would go back to something easy, like cutting the Brigade of Guards or abolishing child benefit.

plastic arts that we dare not even risk a Diana statue. As visitors to next week's Royal Academy Summer Show will notice, sculpture may shock but it has lost the will to express deeper emotion. Imagine a "Diana" by Antony Gormley or Damien Hirst. So we turn in despair to Mother Nature. Mr Brown's committee is playing safe and proposing a memorial garden.

The decision not to make a decision on a Diana memorial last autumn was wise. London is littered with statues to those who enjoyed greater fame when they died than thereafter. Why is the Duke of Cambridge in Whitehall, Baron Clyde in Waterloo Place, Simon Bolivar in Belgrave Square and Dame Louisa Aldrich-Blake, "skilled in boxing and cricket", in Tavistock Square? Gordon of Khartoum and Edward Jenner, inventor of vaccine, were splendidly portrayed in Trafalgar Square after their deaths. They were then ignominiously removed elsewhere as were Generals Havelock and Napier. And who remembers Guy the Gorilla, so famous (in 1978) as to have a memorial at Crystal Palace? Those who commemorate in haste must repent at leisure.

But not so fast. The plan is to build a 16-acre formal parterre over the park south of Kensington Palace, where the "Cellophane meadow" appeared last September. This would be filled with herbs, ponds, and small statues. A fountain would rise above the Round Pond. To the north the "Wilderness" laid out by William and Mary in the 1680s would be recreated as a less formal space. This would cost £10 million, equivalent to a quarter of the (separate) Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

Real reaction to this modest plan shows that the Diana magic is fast dispersing in the face of "not-in-my-Kensington-back-yard". This money, say critics, would be spent in an already rich part of town. Diana was not a flower-lover and would have wanted the money spent on charity. The parterre will need enclosure and guarding, and will take precious

space from the park. As for the fountain, it will sink boats in the Round Pond and soak strolling nannies. And the last thing residents want is another magnet to draw tourists to their neighbourhood.

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If I were Kensington, I would grab the money and run. After a ferocious residents meeting last week, the local MP, Alan Clark, warned his constituents not to behave like suburban Nimbys. Those who inhabit Central London live in a world capital not a village. They must accept crowds. But they are right about the 16 acres south of the palace. This fine sweep of landscape needs more grass, not less. There should be no garden here. A real monument to Diana's memory would be to tear down the obtrusive and vulgar Royal Garden Hotel, but such a boon is apparently beyond any power known to politics. The proposal to restore the old Wilderness north towards Bayswater Road is excellent. The area is a mess, more a municipal park, with scruffy coaches, playgrounds and ugly railings. A new "secret" garden, where Diana could be commemorated as both huntress and huntress, would be a tranquil aside from the London roar, and draw tourists away from central Kensington.

Memorials should be appropriate to the dignity of a city, as well as of those they commemorate. Diana's fame, like her death, was accidental, that of a wealthy girl briefly married to a Prince and torn from life soon afterwards. Such accidental fame tends to wither quickly. As Conrad wrote, "in the plucking the fruits of memory, we risk spoiling the bloom". It is hard to see what physical monument can quite capture the magic of her name, especially when those charged with guarding it are selling it to margarine companies.

Diana, Princess of Wales, is remembered chiefly by those to whom she offered comfort in adversity, often comfort through the example of adversity of her own. She was an equivocal role-model, but undeniably a potent one. Perhaps Mr Brown could fall back on Scots theology, and have no truck with man-made icons. He should honour his remit from the Prime Minister by giving the £10 million to charity, and asking those who wish to remember Diana to do just that, to remember her. She was not a shrub but a person.

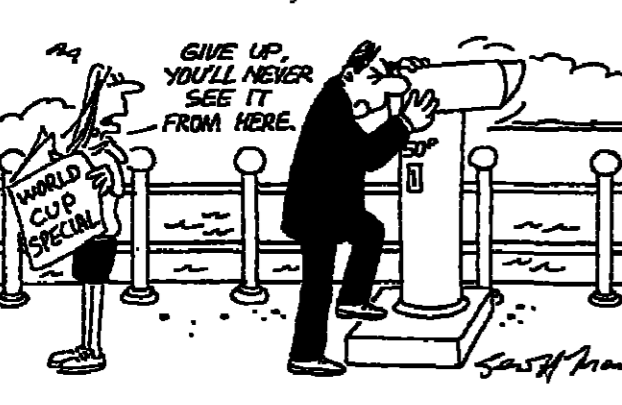
The author is Astronomer Royal.

Scream team

WHILE not snooping undercover for MI6, Jonathan Aitken has been unwinding by engaging in "scream therapy". To lift the strain of his libel battle against *The Guardian*, he has attended the same salon as one Mandy Rice-Davies, another scandal-hit curse of the Conservatives. Aitken (pictured) started subjecting himself to this fashionable deep form of massage during his failed case. The clinic he chose is run by Roger Golden, a "Hellerwork" therapist whose "deep tissue" body workouts designed to relieve chronic tension, are reputed to be so intense that they make subjects scream during treatment. Miss Rice-Davies (pictured), now a novelist, enjoys the harsh caress: "I write my books by hand and tend to get back and shoulder problems, so I am very keen on massages."



As a former call-girl who took centre stage with Christine Keeler in the 1963 Profumo scandal, she helped to bring down Harold Macmillan. Aitken's problems, while of a different variety, did much to undermine John Major's

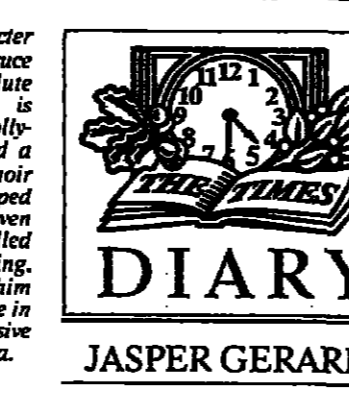


● LIKE a debauched character from one of his scripts, Bruce Robinson, the engagingly dissolute creator of *Withnail and I*, is bringing a taste of Soho to Hollywood. Robinson, who gathered a cult following for his filmic memoir of *Sixties excess*, recently popped over to discuss ideas with Steven Spielberg. When Robinson rolled up to his mansion one morning, the director's guards frisked him after spotting a suspicious bulge in his jacket pocket. The offensive weapon? A large bottle of vodka.

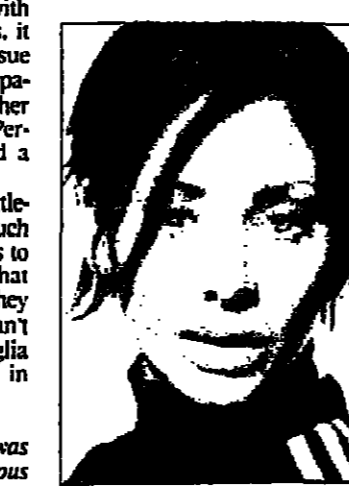
Helping hand DR LIAM FOX has come to the rescue of Natalia Imbruglia, the antipodean pop star (adorning these jottings, right). The Tory constitutional spokesman, mentioned as one of the delightful singer's arm-rests, stepped in to sort out a spot of trouble she was encountering with US Immigration. The wretches, it seems, were not prepared to issue Imbruglia with the necessary paperwork for her to pursue her career in the United States. (Perhaps her application contained a CD rather than a photograph.)

The dashing MP did the gentlemanly thing and put her in touch with a US senator, which seems to have done the trick. "That's what MPs do," says Fox. Hmm. So they do for their constituents, but I can't say I have noticed Miss Imbruglia wiggling up the High Street in Weston-super-Mare.

● THE tortoise race at Oxford was a tense affair this year. Corpus



Christi was nervous before the start when their man went missing. A partisan don, Clive Ellory, offered his own competitor to take on the Balliol behemoth, Rosa Luxemburg. But Rosa, who had been limbering up in a compost heap before the race, romped to victory. She displayed her respect for the oppo-



sition — all over the boots of the Master of Corpus Christi.

Naked talent THE Quentin Tarrantino of the English stage is suffering the rigours of her art. Sarah Kane has stepped in to appear as Grace, the lead female role, in the last three performances of *Cleanse*, after Susan Sylvester, the actress, injured her back last weekend. The playwright, whose last play, *Blasted*, contained the usual lashings of sick violence, spent most of the performance naked. She was also tortured, simulated sex with the ghost of her dead brother and underwent a sex change without anaesthetic. For comic interludes, flesh-eating, mechanical rats scoured around the West End stage snapping at ankles. "She received a great response," says one. "She did the sadistic stuff like Olivier on speed."

● HAS Ann Widdecombe ever succumbed to the image consultants' offers to make her more "media-friendly"? "Most emphatically not," she has previously maintained. But in *Widdecombe Fair*, tonight's Sky News portrait of the delightful MP, she concedes a moment of weakness: "There were a large number of attempts by Central Office to get me to see a consultant. I strongly resisted. Finally, Gillian Shephard managed to get me to one, saying she was afraid to go alone. Absolute waste of time. I laughed and took no notice of anything she said." Quite right too.

Is there anybody out there?

Research depends on the quest for life, says Martin Rees

Space research is so expensive that its funding is bound to be precarious unless it fires broad public enthusiasm. That is why American space science programmes astutely focus on a theme of "origins". Astronomers have long suspected that other stars, like our Sun, are orbited by retinues of planets. But the first clinching evidence came only in 1995. Swiss scientists, using modest-sized telescopes on the ground detected very slight wobbles in a star's position, induced by an orbiting planet. Yesterday's coverage of follow-up research by Hubble testifies to our fascination as to whether we are "alone".

The only planets so far detected are big ones. It will be a hundred times harder directly to detect planets like Earth. Suppose an astronomer 40 light years away had detected Earth, it would be, in Carl Sagan's phrase, a "pale blue dot", seeming very close to a star (our Sun) that outshines it by many millions. Analysis of its light would reveal an oxygen-rich atmosphere. The shade of blue would differ slightly depending on whether the Pacific Ocean or the Eurasian land mass was facing us. Distant astronomers could, therefore, infer that the Earth was spinning and learn the length of its day, and even infer something of its topography and climate.

Yet even if we did discover another planet with a propitious environment, how likely is it to harbour life? A clue — tantalising and tentative, but embarrassingly hyped up by NASA's publicity machine — emerged in 1996 when traces of seemingly organic material were found in a meteorite believed to have been knocked off Mars. But primitive life may not always develop as it did on Earth. And, though the odds may be stacked against it, even if extraterrestrial intelligences exist, they may be leading contemplative lives and doing nothing to reveal themselves to us. Absence of evidence would not be evidence of absence. They could be "organic" life: they could equally well be machines constructed by (or evolved from) such life. But if they were to reveal themselves, conventional wisdom suggests it would most likely be via radio frequency signals.

Radio telescopes have been used to scan the sky for artificial transmissions. Even these small-scale efforts have had a hard time getting public funding (even at the level less than the tax revenues from a single science fiction movie) because the topic is encumbered by manifestly "flakey" connotations. Such projects are obviously a gamble, with heavy odds against success. Signals would take many years in transit. For this reason alone, transmission would be primarily one way — there would be time to devise a measured response, but no scope for quick repartee.

But the mere receipt of a manifestly artificial signal, even if the "culture gap" were too wide to allow us to make sense of it, would in itself have immense scientific and philosophical import. We would know that our Earth was not the only place where something interesting had evolved, and that concepts of logic and physics were not peculiar to the hardware of human skulls.

It would in some ways be disappointing if searches for intelligent life were doomed to fail. But we could then envisage our Earth and its biosphere in a less humble cosmic perspective than it might otherwise merit.



THE smartest bash in every brief's diary is to be hijacked by one of the greatest disasters in musical history. The Inns of Court Ball, an annual riot of champagne, truffles and obscene wealth, attended by 2,000 silken types, is to see the relaunch of Sigge Skutumpah. The hyped "futuristic" band crashed because of indifference from a discerning public, leaving its record company with a £4 million debt. The group's performance at Inner Temple next month will test the tastes of guests such as Helena Kennedy, QC, Peter Carter-Ruck and Lord Irvine of Lairg, who might prefer the wallpaper music of Belinda Carlisle, who should salvage the entertainment. The band will renew its acquaintance of maliciously wounding a fan with a beer bottle. "It's their first show for a decade and they have been practising for months. They are determined actually to play their instruments," says a friend of theirs who promises the group will perform all of its greatest hit, *Love Missile F1-11 (Shoot it Up)*. Janet Street-Porter, who once dated Tony James, bass player and "brain" behind the Sputnik scam, has been invited. It promises to be a most harmonious evening.

ACUAR... WILSON... 'God... IT COULD BE... for the duties are delightful...



NUCLEAR ILLOGIC

Why Cold War history is irrelevant to the Indian subcontinent

The most dangerous fallacy that could be adopted in the wake of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests is that deterrence will now operate to prevent war between them and thus paradoxically make the sub-continent safer. When the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic warhead in 1949, the world became an infinitely more dangerous place: so it is today. Memories of Cold War nuclear deterrence may now be dominated by knowledge of the elaborate precautions against nuclear "accidents" taken by both super-powers. But these were not always in place.

The fears in the 1950s of a four-minute warning of nuclear strikes were not hysterical propaganda. Reliable early warning systems came later — the Cuba missile crisis of 1962 came about because the US detected the Soviet missiles only when they were deployed. The "MAD" doctrine of mutual assured destruction was preceded by a nuclear arms build-up during which military doctrine, both in America and in the Soviet Union, embraced the possibility of decisive first strikes. The switch from war-fighting to deterrence was determined by the certainty that the use of inter-continental ballistic missiles would be suicidal. Nuclear disarmament began with the dismantling of short-range, tactical and battlefield nuclear weapons because it was understood that these were the most destabilising, because the most likely to be used. These are the weapons India and Pakistan are ambitious to acquire.

Even in the early years, both super-powers were grimly certain that they risked nuclear-armed world war. A nuclear arms race between two hostile regional powers is inherently more unstable — above all when both are actually engaged in low-intensity conflicts, along the "line of control" in disputed Kashmir and, with singularly futile irrationality, on the Siachen glacier. Irrational phobias have always governed India-Pakistan relations. There was not much emotion about the Cold War. No leader, East or West, came close to uttering the wild threats that Delhi and Islamabad constantly trade with each other, and which have become more inflammatory than ever in the past two months. To the dangers of false

alarms due to technological malfunction, political miscalculation must thus be added.

Nowhere in the world is war more likely to happen by accident. In a battlefield crisis, Pakistan could well find itself, as it has been in previous wars, in a position of conventional inferiority. Unlike India, it has said nothing about "no first use" of nuclear weapons and its Foreign Minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, has even claimed that Pakistan would come better out of a nuclear exchange because it lacks India's huge concentrations of city populations. Both countries have test-fired missiles, India's Agni and Pakistan's Ghauri, with potential ranges of 1,500 miles; India's would cover all of Pakistan, western China and much of South Central Asia; Pakistan's could reach Indian targets as far south as Madras. With conventional warheads, they are too inaccurate to be effective; nuclear-armed, they would be devastating.

The imperative, therefore, more important than getting them to sign the comprehensive test ban treaty or even the nuclear nonproliferation, is to stop either country from "weaponising" — the decisive next step in this dangerous race. The window of opportunity is not large, possibly nine to 12 months. Can it be done? Probably not, if Britain dissuades the EU from economic sanctions that would "hurt the poor". The poor stand to lose still more if money far in excess of the West's combined aid is diverted to nuclear weapons.

Both India and Pakistan have voters. The sooner they can be convinced that their leaders have made a hugely costly blunder, the better. Nawaz Sharif told President Clinton that for Pakistan to hold off tests would be electoral disaster; but he must be nervous that economic pain could be too, or Pakistan would not have declared a state of emergency that includes press censorship. In India, sobriety was returning before the Pakistan tests. Sharp cuts in aid would puncture the rhetoric about joining the "top table" of world powers. These two countries will never be more than minor powers so long as they stay poor. Economic pain should help to dissuade other nuclear aspirants — and save poor as well as rich in both countries from the risk of incineration.

WHITSUNTIDE

'God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son...' (Galatians iv.6)

In the English language and in English thought-forms the word "spirit" can be problematic. In most European languages this is not the case. Geist in German and esprit in French do not have the often attenuated English sense in which spirit is simply equated with mind or intellect. There are those at the opposite pole who make another simple equation: "spirit" is simply feeling or emotion — the irrational, the ecstatic, even the disordered. While there is a proper contrast to be made between spirit and letter, dynamic power and formal structure, a simple opposition between spirit and order is distorting.

The word "spirit" has do with life. The biblical writers made a simple equation between life and breath. In Genesis the ancient myth of creation depicted God breathing into the nostril of Adam, and "the man became a living soul". The Psalmist wrote that when God took away breath, human beings died and "were turned again to their dust".

The Hebrew writers called wind and breath alike *ruach*, the livingness of things, the livingness of the human person, and no less the livingness of God the creator. To speak of God as Spirit is to speak of God as the creative, communicative source of life and being, in whose image human personhood is made.

This Sunday, Whit Sunday, the Feast of Pentecost, the Christian churches keep the festival of the Holy Spirit. The distorting identification of spirit with intellect on the one hand and emotion on the other has made this feast of the irruption of the Holy Spirit the Cinderella of the three great Christian festivals in comparison with

Christmas and Easter. Yet at its heart it is a celebration of the possibility of a new life, the life of grace, and the divine gift which makes this possible. Lancelot Andrewes, the great 17th-century bishop and preacher, saw Pentecost as the feast of "God-in-us", the fulfilment of Christmas, "God-with-us".

The new gift of life is a gift enabling Christlikeness. To be touched by the Spirit of Christ is to be drawn into a magnetic field or network which engenders those qualities of life that Paul calls "the fruits of the Spirit" — "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance". That magnetic power, that source of life, is at the heart of the Church, the community and communion of Christ's new creation, which is ordered in love by the life-giving Spirit.

The opposite we know all too well — the enslaving power of the violence and fear engendered by a Pol Pot or a Stalin, or the capacity of human nature to be made captive to addictions of many kinds — pornography, possessions, the drugs of domination, and the drugs of escape, the distorting lenses of religious and racial wars, and every variety of sectarian tribalism. All of these make up that world of sin from which we need first to be saved, and then the grace to transform.

Pentecost celebrates the possibility of that transformation. The life-giving Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, is the whirlwind of grace and the fire of love whose glory shines in lives marked by the fruits of the Spirit, and wherever old hatreds give way to the possibilities of peace. At Pentecost the God from whom all things take their origin is known as a transforming presence, a God nearer than breathing, whose grace is a resource of love to change the world.

IT COULD BE LORD YOU

For the duties are delightful and the privileges great

A politicised version of the National Lottery should select the members of a reformed "people's" House of Lords. As we report today, Demos, the fashionable think-tank, will make this speculative proposal in a report due to be published next week.

There are incidental merits in its suggestion. The first democracy did indeed select its jurors and some of its magistrates by mechanical lottery machines, though the franchise was limited. Sortition (election by raffle) can be seen as a more democratic process than being born with a title inherited from an ancestor who slept with a king, or came over to conquer with William, or knew Lloyd George. A genuine lottery would produce a more representative sample of modern Britain than the partisan lottery of lists of superannuated politicians, or the expensive tombola of contributors to party funds, or Buggins's lucky dip of office-holders and other professional representatives.

But there are also demerits in picking new peers by the tumble of the balls. Under the Lords' and commoners' law of averages, the people's ermine will fall on inconvenient as well as random or deserving shoulders. Crofters in Lewis and family solicitors in Penzance might resent having to commute to

London — and missing the weekend train home because of a three-line people's whip.

In the *Wasps*, the predecessor of *Have I Got News for You?*, Aristophanes sent up the populist delusions of election by lottery. In it only the elderly retired can afford to be elected. They may think that they are enjoying the pleasures and benefits of exercising power irresponsibly. But in fact they are being manipulated by cynical professional politicians and spin-doctors. The chance of being a self-important lottery legislator becomes addictive and corrupting.

So there will have to be safeguards if peers are ever to be elected by lot. Otherwise there will be ugly scenes over the breakfast table when the news of ennoblement arrives. As in the common National Lottery, the winners of peerages should be allowed to opt for no publicity. There must be a rule to prevent ambitious politicians such as Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare from buying 100 tickets in their lordships' lottery. The Anthea Turner figure hosting the draw on television must perform in ermine and with dignity, because, with all their faults, the British love their House of Peers. And the consolation prize for those who just fail to become people's peers must be a job at Demos.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

A time to forgive, if not forget, Japan's wartime record?

From Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach

Sir, After what they have been through it would be unreasonable to expect our ex-Far East prisoners of war to forget. It would not be unreasonable to expect them to forgive. If over the centuries the people of our country had persisted in the same attitude of vindictive hatred there would today be hardly a single nation in Europe, Africa, Asia or the sub-continent of India with whom we were on terms. Does any responsible person seriously think that is the way to shape the world of the future?

More than 50 years later our ex-PoWs continue to bang on about apologies and compensation. Such as we accorded to the citizens of Dresden and Hamburg? Or to the French at Oran? Or to the Indians at Amritsar? By their interperate display of ill-mannered rudeness and discourtesy to a visiting head of state — who has uttered generous and evidently heartfelt regrets over past events for which he was in no way responsible — they have brought shame on themselves and discredit on their country.

I write as someone who also fought in the Far East in 1941 and whose father was killed by the Japanese in an entirely honourable action. War is an unpleasant business.

Yours faithfully, HENRY LEACH, Winstone Lea, Winstone, Winchester, Hampshire SO21 3LS, May 29.

From Major-General I. H. Lyall Grant

Sir, It makes one despair of human nature, and the possibilities of peaceful co-existence, that a handful of "vet-

erans", however appalling the treatment that some of them suffered as prisoners or internees more than 50 years ago, should try to insult publicly the head of state of a proud and friendly foreign country for what appear to be purely personal reasons.

Perhaps, before attempting to prolong an old dispute, they should think harder about the harm they do to their country, and the disservice they do to their grandchildren.

Those who condone their actions should reflect on the much larger number who suffered severe injury in the long fight against Japan and, if they were lucky enough to survive, do not complain. Those who publicise the antics of the few should think again about the wisdom of doing so.

Yours sincerely, IAN LYALL GRANT (Honorary President, Burma Campaign Fellowship Group), 6 St Martin's Square, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1NT, May 28.

From Major-General C. A. Kinwig (ret)

Sir, May I offer a footnote on the Far East PoWs' reaction to the visit of Emperor Akihito?

First, it is not "the scars of war", as the Emperor's speech expressed it, which the PoWs bear, but the scars of Japan's failure to obey the laws of war as expressed in the Hague and Geneva Conventions and which her Government had promised to observe. It is for this that they seek acknowledgement of fault and recompense.

Secondly, the earlier compensation which the PoWs received (in instalments, incidentally) was not a direct payment by "the bankrupt Japanese", as Simon Jenkins suggests (A time to

forgive", May 27), but was the proceeds of the seizing of Japanese assets in Allied hands which had been frozen at the start of the war.

Finally, the principle of paying even this compensation was initially opposed by our Government of the day and by the Chiefs of Staff. Perhaps in today's changed political climate the exacting of such compensation in similar circumstances might be an appropriate aim of an ethical foreign policy.

Yours sincerely, CLIFFORD KINWIG, Toft Cottage, Perrons Brook, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 7BL, May 28.

From Dr Stephen K. Carter

Sir, I have taught European studies this year to a group of Japanese students at King's College London. They are very nice, polite and industrious; but in the section dealing with the history of the Cold War I became aware that none of them knew about the brutal Japanese imperialism of the 1930s and 1940s.

If the Japanese Ministry of Education were to commission a history of Japanese Fascism and incorporate it into the high-school syllabus, we would all feel happier about the future of this truly great and talented nation.

As Simon Jenkins writes in his article today, "Only the damned forget their history."

Yours faithfully, STEPHEN K. CARTER (Senior Lecturer in Politics and Modern History), London Guildhall University, Calcutta House, Old Castle Street, E1 7NT, May 27.

Car emissions and causes of asthma

From Mr Ian Watson

Sir, Vehicle emissions are not as guilty as your leading article suggests (Bureaucratic haze" May 27) for the rise in asthma. Research by the US Environmental Protection Agency indicates that air pollution within the home is up to 70 times higher than outside, and that a dangerous cocktail of chemicals created by dry-cleaned clothes, air fresheners, cigarette smoke and chlorinated water, combined with household dust-mites and their excrement, are probably behind the asthma epidemic — not the car.

The problems with vehicle pollution are, as you note, mainly caused by poor maintenance; the RAC has found that the cleanest 70 per cent of vehicles in London produce only 18 per cent of the pollution. Pollution from power stations, as you report in the same edition, is now thought to be as culpable as ill-maintained vehicles.

Yours faithfully, IAN WATSON, 76 Sterling Place, South Ealing, W5 4RB, ian.watson@ic.ac.uk, May 27.

From the Director General of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

Sir, Cleaner air in our city centres will not be achieved by tougher enforcement of existing laws alone. There must also be a fundamental change in the way we choose to travel.

Congestion causes pollution. Motor engines are at their least efficient when they are idling in a traffic jam. A comprehensive set of measures giving priority to buses will go a long way to solving this problem.

If local authorities go down this route, not only will buses move more freely, but people will at last be able to see that public transport is more reliable, efficient and environmentally friendly than a traffic-bound private car.

A thriving bus network ensures the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of any city centre. To date, the bus industry has nothing but admiration for the positive approach adopted by this Government towards public transport and, more importantly, its passengers — announcements on the restoration of fuel duty rebate and the new rural bus grant are just two examples. We await the White Paper with interest.

Yours faithfully, VERONICA PALMER, Director General, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK, Imperial House, 15-19 Kingsway, WC2B 6UN, May 27.

Image of the media

From Lord Hurd of Westwell

Sir, I am awed that William Rees-Mogg should look so comprehensively through his powerful microscope at my novel, *The Shape of Ice* ("The Hurd instinct", May 28). I do not quarrel with his analysis — until we get to the sleight of hand at the end.

Because the novel treats the modern media with less than flattery Lord Rees-Mogg holds that its author cannot be a true democrat. It is understandable that a former Editor of *The Times* should equate democracy with the media. It is, I think, open for other democrats to disagree.

Yours truly, DOUGLAS HURD, House of Lords, May 28.

Off the scent

From Dr Daphne L. Watkins

Sir, Mr Ian Rae (letter, May 22), his interest caught by news of an undetectable toiletry which makes men more attractive to women, asks if there are "any plans to market an odourless repellent". Is Mr Rae quite certain that he would need this?

Yours faithfully, D. WATKINS, Ty Newydd, Velindre, Crymch, Pembrokeshire SA41 3XF, May 22.

From Dr J. A. D. Ewart

Sir, No, Mr Rae: most of us men don't need repellent.

Yours faithfully, J. A. D. EWART, Delgany, Solesbridge Lane, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 5SW, May 22.

Screen tests

From Mr Michael Stanhope

Sir, May I suggest to the team at Edinburgh Zoo, who have concluded that female chimpanzees are more likely to become addicted to television than males (report, May 29), that a more scientific approach would be to repeat the experiment, this time replacing the nature documentaries with live coverage of the World Cup.

Yours faithfully, M. B. STANHOPE, Alma House, Wiltot, Luttermouth, Leicestershire LE17 5BE, May 29.

Falklands future

From Mr Harold Briley

Sir, In his letter of May 15, Robert Elgood, Vice-Chairman of the Falkland Islands Association, blamed the Argentine press for hyping-up expectations that President Menem's planned visit to the United Kingdom in November could further Argentina's sovereignty claim to the Falkland Islands.

However, as your report confirms ("Menem's Falkland challenge to the Queen", May 25), it is the Argentine Government itself, not just the media, which is the prime mover in relentlessly pressing this false claim. It has intensified that campaign at every opportunity.

The British public needs constant reminding that evasion of the Argentine invaders by the British task force — at high cost in lives lost and men injured — did not unfortunately end the dispute in Argentina's view. I was there at the time, when Argentina said it had "lost a battle not the war". It has continued to wage a war of words ever since, in its campaign to win by diplomatic means what it failed to do by aggression.

What is at stake is the islanders' right to live in freedom, just as the Argentinians do, thanks to Britain's part in defeating the Argentine military regime. Britain today cannot allow the sacrifices of 1982 to count for nothing.

Yours faithfully, HAROLD BRILEY (BBC Latin America Correspondent in Argentina, 1982), 36 Stars Mead, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0UG, May 25.

Bankside art

From the Director of the Tate Gallery

Sir, Mr Fletcher Robinson (letter, May 28) need have no concerns. The City will certainly be well served by the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art when it opens at Bankside in 2000 and is, we hope, directly connected to the north bank by Norman Foster, Anthony Caro and Chris Wise's elegant footbridge.

The displays will include all of the Tate's classic 20th-century works, including groups by Cézanne, Picasso, Matisse, Giacometti, Bacon, Nicholson and Rothko, as well as more recent British and international art. The Turner Prize itself, being confined to recognising the achievements of British artists, will remain at the revitalised Tate Gallery of British Art on Millbank.

Yours faithfully, NICHOLAS SEROTA, Director, Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1P 4RG, May 29.

Fit for an Emperor

From Mr M. W. Lee

Sir, The banquet given for the Emperor of Japan, you tell us today, had an "avowedly British" menu. You then, in the edition seen here, reproduce the said menu — in French!

I have, down the years, consumed some choice morsels served up in your pages, but this latest *prend le biscuit*.

Yours faithfully, M. W. LEE, 2bis, Rue d'Alsace-Lorraine, 45000 Orléans, France, May 27.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Reassessment of cannabis dangers

From Mr Steven Davis

Sir, Dr Andrew Wilski (letter, May 23) makes valid points on the adverse effects of long-term cannabis use. Yet he acknowledges that "those who are mentally sturdy may tolerate its use without great harm". It seems that the greatest peril to the long-term pot user is to induce "a state of low motivation". Shouldn't the mentally sturdy be allowed to choose?

The deleterious effects of long-term alcohol consumption are well known and are measurably more destructive than prolonged cannabis use. Yet there is no outcry in Great Britain to ban alcohol.

In my country marijuana prohibition has been a huge failure, lining the pockets of dealers and lawyers and turning otherwise law-abiding people into criminals.

The great erosion of will is more with politicians, who do not seem to give serious consideration to this subject, than with the individual user.

Yours truly, STEVEN DAVIS, 911 Jewel Street, Austin, Texas 78704, ddavis@flash.net, May 24.

From Mr Pat Dolan

Sir, Dr Wilski tells us that it should be obvious to anyone working in the field of psychiatry that "cannabis is a stealthily noxious substance", but offers no evidence.

For thirty years I have worked in the field as a counsellor and read widely in drugs literature. During that time I have known six psychiatrists who attended Alcoholics Anonymous meetings to help them recover from alcoholism. I have yet to hear of anyone trying to recover from addiction to marijuana.

In 1988, after a two-year investigation involving thousands of pages of expert testimony, the American Drug Enforcement Agency's own chief administrator, Francis L. Young, concluded that "marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man" (Docket No. 86-22, September 6, 1988).

Thus I trust Dr Wilski will not think me guilty of either "ill-will or ignorance" if I find his position totally unpersuasive.

Yours etc, PAT DOLAN, 503 Fendrell Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6E 3N4, pdolan@intergate.bc.ca, May 25.

Voting reform

From Mr Bernard Black

Sir, In Peter Riddell's review of the Conservative Party's submission to the Independent Commission on Electoral Reform ("Conservatives right to state their case on voting reforms", May 22) he avers that the commission "was never supposed to be a detached inquiry into the voting system. It was always intended to come up with an alternative to first past the post that could be sold both to Labour and the Lib Dems." If that is the case the commission is founded on a sham and is unworthy of the prefix "independent".

As the issue is to be decided by a referendum originally promised by the late John Smith, who pointed out in 1993 that the last people to decide between system A and system B are those elected by system A, it is fervent-

Teenage parties

From Mrs Judy Astley

Sir, Several times we have gone away for a few days leaving the teenage daughters in charge of the house (letters, May 27). We have found there is a sort of damage-limitation ratio: the cleaner the place is when we get back, the more people they have had in.

Yours faithfully, JUDY ASTLEY, 2 The Embankment, Twickenham, TW1 3DU, May 27.

Medieval 'mad cows'

From Professor J. H. Baker, QC, FBA

Sir, The government lawyers whom you today report to be searching for the origins of official concern about "mad cow" disease might care to begin their investigations in the medieval period.

In the reign of Henry VII a butcher was indicted for buying, slaughtering and selling meat derived from a mad cow (*waca furiosa*), knowing it to be such and unfit for human consumption. According to the wording of the indictment, a contemporary copy of which survives in the British Library, this was "contrary to the custom of the realm".

Those words indicate that the problem had been familiar time out of mind; and the indictment was framed on the assumption that selling meat from mad cows was a common-law misdemeanour. We ignore past wisdom at our peril.

Yours faithfully, J. H. BAKER, St Catharine's College, Cambridge CB2 3RL, May 28.

Off target

From Mr R. V. Munden

Sir, I hope Anne Robinson's Gucci-wearing farmer friends who are so "impressively knowledgeable on countryside matters" (Weekend, May 23) are duly prosecuted when they start shooting pheasants in August.

The close season for pheasants is from February 2 to September 30.

Yours sincerely, R. V. MUNDEN, Lower Woodbrook, Lorton, Taunton, Somerset TA3 7ST, May 28.

Weekend Money letters, page 61



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 28: The Emperor and the Empress of Japan, with the Japanese Suite in attendance, left Buckingham Palace this morning on the conclusion of the State Visit to The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh.
His Majesty visited the Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, was received by the President (Sir Ghilleain France), met Fellows and Members and viewed exhibits.
Her Majesty visited the British Red Cross Society National Headquarters, Grosvenor Crescent, Belgrave, London, and was received by Sir Alan Munro (Vice Chairman of the Board).



Lorna Sumner and Mark Currie, from Ealing, West London, who have recently announced their engagement

Forthcoming marriages

The Hon O.R. Cumberlege and Miss N. Pennington
The engagement is announced between Oliver, youngest son of Mr Patrick Cumberlege and Baroness Cumberlege of Newick, Sussex, and Nicola, eldest daughter of Dr and Mrs Christopher Pennington, of Wordsley, West Midlands.
Mr S.D. Desson and Miss E.M.M. Brodrick
The engagement is announced between Simon, younger son of Mr and Mrs Robert Desson, of Measham, Leicestershire, and Elizabeth, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Martin Brodrick, of Thursty, Cumbria.

Dinners

Royal College of Radiologists
Professor Lewis Wolff, FRCS, delivered the 42nd Crookshank lecture to the Royal College of Radiologists at a ceremony in the Admissions of New Fellows held yesterday at the Royal College of Physicians. Professor Charles Gooding and Professor Michael Baum were admitted as Honorary Fellows.

Weekend birthdays

Prince Rainier III of Monaco celebrates his 75th birthday tomorrow.
TODAY:
Mr Neville Brynbrooke, writer, 75; Mr W.P. Cleland, thoracic surgeon, 85; Mr Ray Cooney, theatrical producer, 66; the Marquess of Ely, 85; Mr Harry Enfield, writer, actor and comedian, 37; Mr Andrew Farrell, rugby league player, 23; the Right Rev J.W. Gladwin, Bishop of Guildford, 56; Mr Richard Hannon, racehorse trainer, 53; Air Marshal Sir Reginald Harland, 78; Sir David Knox, former MP, 65; Mr Timothy Jewell, director, Henry Moore Foundation, 51; Sir Ian Lloyd, former MP, 77; Dr John Marks, former chairman, British Medical Association, 73; Dr R.G.G. Mercer, Headmaster, Prior Park College, Bath, 49; Mr A.R. Moore, former diplomat, 80; Mr Colin Myler, former managing director, Daily Mirror, 46; Sir Duncan Nichol, former chief executive, National Health Service Management Executive, 57; Lord Richard, QC, Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords, 60; Mr Tim Waterstone, 50; Sir Derek Birley, former Vice-Chancellor, Ulster University, 72; Professor Dame June Clark, Professor of Community Nursing, University of Wales Swansea, 57; Sir John

Service dinners

RN College Greenwich
Commander J.M.C. Maughan, Commander of the Royal Naval College Greenwich, presided at a ladies guest night dinner held last night at the college. Captain P.E. Duncan, Chief Naval Officer for Women, was the principal guest.

Retirement

Judge Gerald Coombe has retired from the South Eastern Circuit.

Sir Ronald Millar

A service to celebrate the life of Sir Ronald Millar will be held at St Paul's Church, Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2, on Monday, June 1, at 11.30.

Christopher Stacy Waddy

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Christopher Stacy Waddy will be held on Friday, June 26, at noon at St Lukes Church, Sydney Street, London SW3.

Anniversaries

TODAY
BIRTHS: Sir Roger Newdigate, antiquary, Arbury, Warwickshire, 1719; Samuel Spalding, philosopher, London, 1807; Alfred Austin, Poet Laureate 1896-1913, Leeds, 1835; Hermann Adler, Chief Rabbi of the British Empire 1891-1911, Hanover, 1836; Peter Carl Fabergé, goldsmith, St Petersburg, 1846; Benny Goodman, clarinetist, Chicago, 1909.
DEATHS: St Joan of Arc, burnt at the stake, Rouen, 1431; Christopher Marlowe, playwright, London, 1537; Sir Peter Paul Rubens, painter, Antwerp, 1640; Alexander Pope, poet, London, 1744; Voltaire, author and philosopher, Paris, 1778; Thomas Chalmers, first Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland (1843-47), Edinburgh, 1847; Wilbur Wright, pioneer of aviation, Dayton, Ohio, 1912; Hermann Broch, writer, New Haven, Connecticut, 1951; Boris Pasternak, novelist, Nobel laureate 1958, Novosibirsk, Russia, 1960; Roy Plomley, creator of Desert Island Discs, London, 1985.
The Peace of Vereeniging, ending the Boer War, 1902.
The Battle of Jutland took place, 1916.
South Africa became a republic and withdrew from the British Commonwealth, 1961.
Adolf Eichmann, a German war criminal, was hanged in Tel Aviv, 1962.
Jane Seymour became Henry VIII's third wife, 1536.
The Grenadier Guards were formed, 1666.
The first experimental hovercraft.

41 SOCCER FANS DIE IN STAMPEDE AT EURO CUP FINAL

By DAVID MILLER, BRUSSELS
At least 41 soccer fans died and more than 150 were seriously injured when a concrete wall topped with fencing collapsed at the front of terracing 45 minutes before the scheduled start of last night's European cup final in Brussels between Liverpool and Juventus of Turin.
Brussels police said last night no British were believed killed. The Belgian soccer federation said 25 of the dead were Italian, seven Belgian, one French and eight remained unidentified.
The start of the match was delayed as officials and ambulances cleared the terraces, and finally kicked off 85 minutes late in front of a crowd of 80,000.
After the game had been lost 1-0, Joe Fagan, the Liverpool manager, said: "We obviously knew there were problems, but we didn't know about the deaths".
Mr Charles Ferdinand Nohomb, the Belgian Interior Minister, said last night on BBC News that the cause was that among the British supporters there were so many who wanted violence.
"We took more precautions than for any other football match of this importance because we feared violence from the British, but we had no idea it would be so brutal. I would be very cautious before letting such people come here again."

ON THIS DAY

May 30, 1985
After Heysel, all English clubs were banned by UEFA from taking part in European competitions, and 14 Liverpool fans were jailed by Belgian courts. The ban was lifted until 1990 (1991 in the case of Liverpool).

Memorial concert

Lady Dacre of Glanton
An orchestral concert in memory of Lady Dacre of Glanton was held last night in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford. The City of London Sinfonia, conducted by Mr Cem Mansur, played Schubert's 5th Symphony and Shostakovich's Anglican Communion Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 59; Mr Peter Winterbottom, rugby player, 38.

Appointments in the Forces

The Army
Colonel G M S Shipley, to BLO EW/CIS (USA), 7.6.98
Retirements
Colonel N J Holland (late REME), 1.6.98; R A Wright (late R Signals), 5.6.98.
Royal Air Force
Retirements
Air Commodore B C Laite, 4.6.98
Group Captain F S Rance, 2.6.98

University news

Cambridge
Queens' College
The following have been elected into honorary fellowships at Queens' College, Cambridge: Mr Aubrey S. Eban, MA; Mr C Michael Foale, MA, PhD

Canterbury Cathedral

Brigadier John Meardon, RM, has been appointed Receiver General of Canterbury Cathedral from June 1 in succession to Rear-Admiral David Macey.



Rescuers struggling desperately to lift wreckage off an injured fan

PERSONAL COLUMN

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

DEATHS
APRISTAGE - Henry died peacefully in hospital in his 94th year on 27th May. He was survived by his wife Hilary, Lesley, Chris and Alan and granddaughters Sophie and Tom. Funeral at Tushnethe Wells Crematorium on June 4th at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if wished, to Alzheimer's Disease Society, 10 Grosvenor Place, London SW1P 1PH.
CONNOR - Mary Joanna, Joanna has lost her courageous battle against cancer. She died peacefully at Sir Michael Sobell Hospital on 27th May 1988 aged just 45. She will be greatly missed by Peter, Emma and Matthew, her family, and many friends. A service will be held at Long Crendon Parish Church on Sat June at 12.30 pm, followed by a private cremation. All flowers only please but donations if desired to Amnesty International or The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 288 Abingdon Road, Oxford OX1 1TE.

COURT & SOCIAL
PORTUGUESE MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGES
These are the names of couples who have been married in the last 24 hours in the City of London. The names are given in the order in which they were married.
A list of names of couples who have been married in the last 24 hours in the City of London. The names are given in the order in which they were married.

DAVIES - Enoch John, greatly respected Nantwich Solicitor (retired) and a dear friend and keen sportsman. On 27th May 1988 at the South Cheshire Private Hospital. Funeral Service at St Mary's Parish Church, Nantwich on Tuesday 30th June at 2 pm, followed by interment in Nantwich Cemetery. Family flowers only or donations to Leighton Hospital "Mighty Magnet" Scheme. All enquiries to F.J. Twissler & Son Funeral Directors, Nantwich. (01270) 626663.

OSBORNE - Joan Reid nee Jones OBE died peacefully at home on 28th May 1988 after a brave battle with cancer. She was 84. Beloved wife of the late Sir John Osborne. Deceased loved husband of Sheila, much loved father of Anthony and Jeremy, and dearly loved by Kerstin and Rosemary. She is survived by her family and all those she helped and encouraged during her long and energetic life. Funeral Service at Hastings Crematorium on Wednesday 3rd June at 12.30. Flowers and inquiries to A. C. Towler Ltd, 2 - a Norman Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 6NH, Tel: 01424 435368.

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Advertisement for Rubka, a company that helps elderly people with their homes and their independence. It includes contact information and a list of services.

Advertisement for 'ESTATE OF VERA IREN RESCOBY DECEASED' with details of the estate and contact information for the executor.

Advertisement for 'PERS' (Personal Services) with contact information and details of services offered.

Shares steady at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table with columns: High, Low, Company, Price, % Chg, P/E. Section: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. Includes companies like 496 505 Allied Breweries, 497 505 Asahi Breweries, 498 505 Carlsberg.

Table with columns: High, Low, Company, Price, % Chg, P/E. Section: BREWERIES, PUBS & REST. Includes companies like 1195 473 Beavert, 1196 473 BA for the, 1197 473 Carlsberg.

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Unigate calls off bitter battle for rival. Here w people wh. Advertisement for Unigate and other products.



ANALYSIS 30 Russia needs IMF approval more than cash

BUSINESS

WEEKEND MONEY SECTION 2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY MAY 30 1998

Unigate calls off bitter battle for rival

By Robert Cole City Correspondent

THE £1.6 BILLION on-off bid by Unigate, the food group, for rival Hillsdown Holdings was finally called off yesterday in acrimony.

Accusations flew as Hillsdown laid blame for the collapse of the deal squarely with Unigate, and Unigate sought to justify its actions.

A Hillsdown adviser said: "Unigate has behaved with extraordinary incompetence." The source said Unigate had "pussy-footed around" and had been "shambolic" in its negotiations.

There had been four approaches by Unigate. First contact was made in August, more serious negotiations came in February, then there were further discussions this month and last month.

Hillsdown believed that Ian Martin, Unigate's chairman, and Ross Buckland, the chief executive, were divided on the wisdom of doing the deal, with Mr Martin being more enthusiastic than Mr Buckland.

These allegations were denied by Unigate. "Our management was united going into this and is united coming out. There is not a crack of daylight between them," a spokesman said.

Unigate said it withdrew because due diligence examinations threw up concerns about the health of Hillsdown's business. "We felt we were unable to support Hillsdown's view on the prospects for the business," the spokesman said.

George Greener, the Hillsdown chief executive, stopped short of outright criticism but did say that he thought Unigate was not sufficiently committed to the deal.

Mr Greener said: "I am at a loss to understand why Unigate backed out. There was no sensible reason I could see why it did." Commenting on the nature of the negotiations he added: "It is not the way I would have done it."

The failure of the bid talks means Hillsdown will now proceed with the three-way demerger proposed earlier in the month. Mr Greener said the talks with Unigate had not distracted Hillsdown from its demerger preparations.

Shares in Hillsdown slumped by more than 10 per cent to 183p. Unigate, which had slipped by 90p this month as the bid story developed, jumped 28.5p to close at 665p.

Commentary, page 29



Sitting pretty: George Soros, who has made a big investment in the British commercial property sector, by ploughing £100 million into Delancey

Delancey boosted by £100m from Soros

By Richard Miles

GEORGE SOROS, the renowned speculator feared by central banks across the globe, has taken a large bet on the UK commercial property market by investing more than £100 million in Delancey Estates.

Delancey, a listed company formerly known as Artesian Estates, needs the cash injection to diversify out of residential property into more lucrative commercial and retail real estate.

In return, the Quantum Realty Fund and Tivadar, two of Mr Soros's investment vehicles, obtain two thirds of Delancey stock and the right to appoint two non-executive directors to its board.

Shares in Delancey, which started life as a Business Expansion Scheme, a defunct tax-efficient investment vehicle, leapt almost 50 per cent to 150p on the announcement. Several thousand private investors will have to approve the deal.

Delancey, which has a market capitalisation of just £25 million, intends to raise a further £28 million through a placing of shares and warrants. As a result, it should have total assets of about £150 million.

The firm has also agreed to buy Freehold Portfolio Estates, a company controlled by James Ritblat, son of John Ritblat, chairman and managing director of British Land. Mr Ritblat junior receives £4 million and becomes managing director of Delancey.

Prior to the deal, the biggest single shareholder in Delancey was James Ritblat with 26 per cent. Robert Fleming also owns a sizeable stake with the rest divided among institutions and private investors.

Colin Wagman, chairman of Delancey, said the deal would transform the firm's profile and rank it among the top quartile of UK quoted property companies.

Tempus, page 31

OrdTec directors sue Customs for £600,000

By Adam Jones

TWO of the businessmen involved in the disastrous arms-to-Iraq prosecutions pursued by the last Government are suing HM Customs and Excise for more than £600,000.

Paul Grecian was given a suspended prison sentence in 1992 for exporting an artillery fuse assembly line to Iraq via Jordan. Mr Grecian was managing director of Ordnance Technologies (OrdTec) and he pleaded guilty to two counts of conspiracy to export prohibited goods.

However, his suspended jail sentence was quashed after the landmark Matrix Churchill case, another arms-to-Iraq prosecution that collapsed, when it became clear that vital documents had been withheld from Mr Grecian's defence. His

father, John Grecian, 67, a fellow director of OrdTec, was also charged over the Iraq exports but no evidence was offered when the matter came to court.

Both men are now suing Customs and Excise. John Grecian is claiming damages of more than £500,000 for alleged malicious prosecution. This covers loss of earnings, disruption of family life and damage to reputation and allows for aggravated and exemplary damages. These are often claimed in cases where oppressive, malicious or particularly humiliating factors are alleged.

John Grecian claimed yesterday that he had been charged simply to put pressure on his son to plead guilty at his own trial. He claimed OrdTec had not known initially that

the fuse assembly would be passed on to Iraq from Jordan. When it became clear, he insisted that there was an official culture of tacit approval.

John Grecian said both he and his son had been bankrupted by the effects of the Customs and Excise prosecutions. He added that it had placed a strain on his marriage and led to his son's divorce.

Paul Grecian is already pursuing a claim for substantially more than £500,000 through a Home Office compensation scheme, an avenue not open to his father. His writ against Customs and Excise, which claims he suffered psychological and other damage, aims to secure a further £100,000 or more in damages.

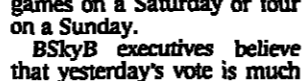
The writ claims Paul Grecian pleaded guilty at his trial in 1992 only after Andrew Collins, QC, the prosecution counsel, said the prosecution would otherwise reveal that he provided information to British intelligence about the IRA and the PLO, endangering his

safety. The official Scott report into defence exports to Iraq recorded that Paul Grecian had provided information to British intelligence officers over Iraqi arms buying.

His writ against Customs also says his guilty plea was made only after unsuccessful attempts to obtain key documents that later became a part of the Scott report. The writ claims these were either deliberately suppressed or Customs made no sincere attempt to get them. It also says Customs was well aware of the suppression of documents when it opposed his appeal.

Paul Grecian also claims that the prosecution said no evidence would be offered against his father if he pleaded guilty at the original trial. Customs and Excise would not comment yesterday.

Tempus, page 31



Paul Grecian: bankrupted

Premier League turns down BSKyB's pay-per-view plan

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

A FAILURE to agree on the split of revenues was behind the surprise decision by the 20 Premier League clubs to turn down BSKyB's proposals for pay-per-view televising of English football. Had a deal been agreed, pay-per-view could have started in October.

The clubs want 60 per cent of all revenues from pay-per-view football, with the rest going to BSKyB, in which News International, owner of The Times, has a 40 per cent stake. BSKyB proposed that it

would pay the £20 million cost of setting up pay-per-view and that after that the two sides would share the revenues 50-50. Such a split is common in pay-per-view rights.

Peter Leaver, chief executive of Premier League, said yesterday: "We want to develop broadcasting arrangements which strike the right balance and secure the right future for English football."

Apart from proposing a 50-50 revenue split BSKyB set out two possible forms of experi-

ment — four pay-per-view games on a Saturday or four on a Sunday.

BSKyB executives believe that yesterday's vote is much more a "proceed with negotiations" rather than a final "no" and that agreement could still be reached in time for some pay-per-view next season.

Pay-per-view would provide extra revenue for Premier League clubs from games that would not otherwise be televised. BSKyB shares closed down 9p at 431p.

PW and C&L choose name

PRICE Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand have played safe over the name of their merged organisation choosing Pricewaterhouse-Coopers (Robert Bruce writes).

The firm said yesterday: "It was critically important to preserve the substantial equity and value associated with the names Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand."

There had been speculation that the name originally preferred, Price Waterhouse & Co, was vetoed by Coopers.

Diary, page 30

IMF lifeline for Russian markets

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

THE Russian Government yesterday received a major boost in its battle to restore calm to its financial markets when the International Monetary Fund confirmed it would shortly provide a substantial cash loan.

John Olding-Smee, IMF regional director, said the previously agreed \$670 million loan will be paid by the end of next month. Mr Olding-Smee dismissed rumours that the IMF would need to provide further emergency funds.

The Russian Government yesterday unveiled a series of reform measures in an effort to plug gaps in its Budget plans. The rouble again held firm at 6.1380 although the Russian Central Bank was forced to keep interest rates at 150 per cent.

Shares in Moscow closed 3.75 per cent lower after Moody's, the international credit agency, downgraded Russia's sovereign debt levels.

Approval sought, page 30

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

Table with 2 columns: Index Name and Value. Includes FTSE 100, FTSE All share, Nikkei, Dow Jones, S&P Composite.

US RATE

Table with 2 columns: Instrument and Rate. Includes Federal Funds, Long Bond, Yield.

LONDON BOURSE

Table with 2 columns: Instrument and Rate. Includes 3-month Interbank, Life long gilt, Future (Jun).

STERLING

Table with 2 columns: Location and Rate. Includes New York, London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, £ Index, Tokyo close Yen.

COMMODITIES

Table with 2 columns: Instrument and Price. Includes Brent 15-day (Aug), London close.

* denotes midday trading price

Barings chief executive resigns

By Richard Miles Banking Correspondent

ING BARINGS, the Dutch-owned City merchant bank, was dealt a major blow yesterday when its chief executive officer left after just five months in the job.

The sudden resignation of Arjun Mathrani, who has spent most of his career with Chase, the US investment bank, follows a wave of defections from the corporate finance division of Barings.

It is thought Mr Mathrani, 53, decided to leave after a disagreement with the Dutch parent over restructuring plans for the corporate and investment banking business of Barings in London.

In a terse statement, ING Barings said Marimus Minderehoud, the chairman of ING Bank, had taken over Mr Mathrani's responsibilities.

Simon Burrows and James Lupton, joint heads of corporate finance, left last month, having disagreed also with ING over strategy.

Since then, there have been more defections, including directors James Moon and Michael Ross, who joined JP Morgan. The instability of emerging markets, a core securities business for Barings, has added to the bank's difficulties.

Commentary, page 29

The patriots who balk at the sale of traditional British companies to the Germans started the week with a spring in their step. Mirror Group, known to be a target for Axel Springer, Germany's largest newspaper publisher, was said to be considering a merger with Trinity, the UK's largest regional newspaper publisher. Their hopes did not last long. On Tuesday, Mirror Group said the exploratory talks had been terminated.

It emerged that British Biotech's former research and development director, Peter Lewis, had admitted in a letter that he feels guilty for failing to take a stand against the company's high-risk strategy. He said he kept quiet to keep his share options. The Stock Exchange asked for a copy of the letter.

Ron Sandler, the chief executive of Lloyd's of London, ran into a barrage of complaints from traditional names — the wealthy individuals who, despite it all, still want to underwrite with unlimited liability. Mr Sandler, who has indicated his preference for the longer-term backing of companies instead, was accused of "black propaganda" by the Association of Lloyd's Members.

BP said uncertainty over the Government's North Sea tax regime, plus low oil prices, was causing work on a potentially huge oilfield to grind to a halt. BP is the senior partner of a consortium of six chasing 5 billion barrels of oil at the Clair Field. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, threatened a North Sea oil taxation review in his Budget statement last July but the industry has not seen a formal consultation document yet.

BBC RADIO 4 advertisement featuring a quote: 'There were some people that tortured me, but there were some people who were a bandage to my wounds. (Vedran, displaced person.)' and program details.

Journey to market follows big order for high-speed tilting trains

Branson aims to float Virgin Rail



Richard Branson has promised to improve Virgin's service

RICHARD BRANSON is poised to press ahead with a swift flotation of his Virgin Trains business as he moves to capitalise on a recent performance improvement.

A crucial hurdle blocking the £250 million float is expected to be cleared next week and Mr Branson will move quickly to end long-running speculation by making a firm announcement within a fortnight.

John Swift, the rail regulator, is expected to give final approval to a revenue-sharing deal between Virgin and Railtrack, the track and signalling company, to improve the West Coast mainline between London and Glasgow.

Mr Swift, who demanded assurances from Virgin about further service improvements, particularly to Glasgow and North Wales, is understood to

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

be satisfied with arrangements made. His approval will clear the way for Mr Branson to take one of his companies on to the market for the first time since he withdrew the Virgin name from the Stock Exchange in 1987.

The head of Virgin is understood to have been persuaded by fellow investors that he should seize the moment for a flotation as quickly as possible, probably in July.

Mr Branson has been buoyed by recent improvements in the punctuality of the West Coast service, which, he said, reached 90 per cent for the first time last month.

The service, which was one of the worst-performing routes under British Rail, is about to have more than £2 billion spent on track improvements and on a new fleet of tilting

trains capable of travelling at 140mph.

City confidence in the transport sector has been shown in recent weeks with steep rises in share prices for the leading rail and bus companies. The upward trend comes amid the expectation that John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, is to unveil a raft of measures aimed at encouraging motorists to stop using their cars and switch to public transport.

Virgin's West Coast service has seen a 13 per cent increase in the number of passengers over its first year in private hands, while the Cross Country route from Aberdeen to Penzance has also shown an 11 per cent rise in numbers.

Mr Branson returned to England last night after making his first journey on the type of tilting train to be

introduced on the West Coast line. His four-hour journey from Turin in northern Italy to Rome, was his first experience of the trains which are now common across much of Europe and which allow much higher speeds.

Earlier this year Virgin announced an order worth £1 billion for 54 high-speed tilting trains for its West Coast mainline from a consortium of GEC-Alsthom and Fiat Ferroviaria. Virgin said the contract was expected to be worth about £500 million for the capital cost of the trains with a further £500 million for in-service maintenance and support. In a separate order Virgin chose Bombardier of Canada to build and maintain a new fleet of 77 trains, including 43 tilting trains for its Cross Country regional network.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Sharp fall in imports narrows trade deficit

BRITAIN'S trade gap with the rest of the world narrowed in March after a sharp drop in imports. The whole world trade and services deficit totalled £1.02 billion compared with £1.59 billion in February. The April non-EU country deficit also closed from £1.02 billion to £715 million. Economists, however, predicted that the gap is set to widen again in coming months saying the improved performance was simply due to a surprise drop in imports.

Import volumes declined by 1.2 per cent compared with a 0.2 per cent fall in exports during March. Over the first quarter as a whole, the deficit stood at £4.7 billion, the widest for eight years. Overall export volumes fell by 0.5 per cent in the three months to March providing evidence of the damage wreaked by the strong pound. Non-EU country export volumes, however, slid 2.4 per cent in the three months to April suggesting the Asian crisis is hampering exports.

Edinburgh Inca slides

EDINBURGH INCA TRUST, an investment trust focusing on Latin America, yesterday blamed the knock-on effect of the Asian economic crisis for a 14 per cent decline of its assets. The trust's net assets fell from £34.7 million to £29.8 million in the six months to March 31 while its share price slid 9.2 per cent. The trust did, however, beat the IFC Latin American Investibles index, down 16.6 per cent. The trust said its out-performance reflected its move away from smaller companies to blue chips in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico.

Wagner's windfall

DAN WAGNER, the 34-year-old chief executive of Dialog Corporation, enjoyed a 43 per cent pay rise last year after merging his MAID database firm with Knight-Ridder Information to create one of the world's largest online information firms. Mr Wagner picked up a £60,000 bonus that took his pay for 1997 to £199,510. Mr Wagner owns 17 million shares in the enlarged company — worth £24.3 million. Although the company did not pay a dividend last year, it is expected to make a 2p payout for 1998.

Millwall's losses ease

MILLWALL, the quoted football club, suffered a loss of £94,000 in the year to the end of last November, an improvement from the £3.3 million loss in the 12 months to the end of May 1996. Losses per share fell from 0.85p to 0.01. Sales rose from £4 million to £5 million. Theo Pappas, the Millwall Holdings chairman, said the results cannot be compared with those of a normal accounting period as they cover an 18-month period and include eight months pre-administration trading and other administration costs. City Diary, page 30

Nissan chief investigated

JAPAN'S securities watchdog yesterday filed a complaint against a former managing director of Nissan Motor for suspected insider trading, according to government sources. The Securities and Exchange Surveillance Commission filed the complaint with the Yokohama regional court on suspicion that Kenji Sawamura purchased 10,000 shares in Nissan's car parts affiliate, Tosok Corp, under his wife's name after obtaining privileged information on the firm's tie-up with Nidec Corp, an electric motor manufacturer.

Wiggins in airline deal

WIGGINS, the property development company, is to set up a civilian airline operation at Manston Airport in Kent which the group took over last year. The company will run a series of charter and freight flights from Manston with Air Atlanta Icelandic. The two will also build an aircraft maintenance centre and a training centre. Air Atlanta's move to Manston is planned to begin in July, with the relationship likely to last for at least 20 years. Wiggins shares rose from 12½p to 14p.

RCO shares tumble

SHARES in RCO, the business support services group, plunged from 238½p to 165p, a five-year low, after the company cut its first-half dividend from 4.95p to 4.00p on the basis that it was "time to bring the dividend into line with the profitability of the business". Earnings fell from 3.62p to 1.39p in the 26 weeks to April 3 out of pre-tax profits down from £571,000 to £215,000 after an increase in exceptional items from £76,000 to £493,000.

Longhurst joins as United Assurance appoints top team

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

ANDREW LONGHURST, the Lloyds TSB director who was a surprise casualty of a boardroom reshuffle, is to become the new chairman and non-executive director of United Assurance, the troubled insurance company.

Shares jumped 37½p to 61p as United Assurance also revealed that its new group chief executive will be Alan Frost, currently managing director of Abbey Life.

Mr Frost, 53, will take up the appointment on July 1. He said his priority would be to increase sales growth. Revenues from sales have been lacklustre since United Assurance was formed from the merger of United Friendly and Refuge Assurance more than 18 months ago. He said: "I will be looking hard at products and at costs."

Cudworth retires at the end of October.

Mr Cudworth said: "I am confident that Andrew and Alan have an excellent platform from which to develop and expand the business."

Analysts welcomed the appointments but remained cautious in their forecasts for the company's earnings. One said: "There is a lot of work to do and we cannot recommend the share until we see some evidence of a turnaround."

Mr Longhurst's compensation payment, believed to be about £90,000, will be disclosed in next year's Lloyds TSB annual report. He will become United's chairman-designate on Monday.



Longhurst to be chairman

Metsec agrees to £41m Austrian bid

By OUR CITY STAFF

METSEC, the engineering group, yesterday agreed to a £41.5 million, 26½p-a-share bid from Voest-Alpine Stahl, the Austrian steel group.

Metsec shares strengthened from 225½ to 255½p on the news, up from the 180p level prevailing on May 5 before bid talks were disclosed.

The Austrian company has received acceptances already for 44 per cent of the shares, including the 23 per cent held by the Birmingham based company's managers.

Metsec, which also has works in Coventry, Cologne and Cracow, employs 500 people and produces 80,000 tonnes of steel a year. Metsec and Voest-Alpine together will have a combined staff of 1,800 and will produce some 450,000 tonnes a year of steel

tubes and sections. Voest-Alpine Stahl said the British company would continue to act independently.

The Austrian group expects that within the first full year of ownership, before taking into account any synergies and before amortization of goodwill, the acquisition of Metsec will be earnings enhancing. Metsec shareholders are entitled to a final dividend of 3½p for the year to December 31.

Voest-Alpine said the acquisition would broaden its building products range, especially in the use of steel in commercial and industrial construction. Wolfgang Spreitzer, managing director of Voest-Alpine, said the acquisition of Metsec represented another step in the group's strategy of international expansion.

American investors put faith in mutuals

From OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AMERICAN private investors have poured \$5 trillion (£3 trillion) into mutual funds, marking a new milestone for America's shareholder democracy.

Statistically, every American now has a \$20,000 stake in the world economy through at least one of the funds.

The money invested in funds has grown by 10 per cent since the end of last year, which helped to power the Dow Jones industrial average to new heights.

The unprecedented soaring of American share prices over the past seven years has been partly triggered by the influx of money from small investors.

In 1991, when stocks began to soar after the 1987 and 1989 global market crashes, US investors had \$1.1 trillion in funds. In 1992, at the start of the roaring 1990s rally, mutual funds held as little as \$300 billion.

According to the Investment Fund Institute, April saw the third-largest ever monthly influx of money, \$26 billion. This is giving Wall Street hope that the Dow will be driven up further even as earnings growth slows down.

But the influx of new investors has also worried some stock market watchers. They fear these inexperienced investors are more prone to panic attacks, raising the spectre of a sudden market crash. A moderate market drop, similar to one that could be caused by an increase in American interest rates ordered by the Federal Reserve, the country's central bank, could trigger a mass withdrawal from funds.

Capita wins preferred bidder status

CAPITA, the business support services group, has been chosen by the Department of Transport, Environment and the Regions as preferred bidder to develop Constructionline, the public sector construction industry procurement service (Our City Staff writes).

It is a seven-year concession with anticipated revenues of more than £40 million. Constructionline is a database of firms assessed for their financial and technical capabilities, used by public sector bodies to identify potential partners for construction services.

Capita will invest £700,000 in developing the service.

Japanese culture of jobs for life undermined by economic woes

From ROBERT WHYMAN IN TOKYO

JAPAN'S unemployment rate passed the 4 per cent mark for the first time in April. Government and business leaders warned the nation that it faced its worst jobs outlook in decades, shaking the traditional culture of a job for life in return for unstinting dedication to one's employer.

Bankruptcies rose and manufacturers shed staff in a drive to cut costs. The jobless total reached 2.9 million, up 25.5 per cent on a year ago, underscoring the Government's failure to halt the economic slide of the past 12 months. The jobless rate — now 4.1 per cent — was especially high among the younger and older age groups. For men aged 60 to 64,



Hashimoto: promised action

unemployment soared 4.2 percentage points to 12.1 per cent, exacerbated by "involuntary early retirement", said the Labour Ministry.

The shake-out of unproduc-

tive labour may be a necessary, if painful, step towards boosting corporate profits and generating growth, but in the short term, fears about job security may make people more reluctant to spend, further depressing domestic demand and forcing firms to reduce output and shed more workers in a vicious spiral.

Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, promised action, announcing that the cabinet would meet next week to discuss ways to alleviate the situation. There were warnings that unemployment in Japan would continue to deteriorate, and surpass that of the US, where the April jobless rate was 4.3 per cent. Earlier this year British unemployment fell below 5 per cent, its lowest for 18 years.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.70	2.58
Austria Sch	21.48	18.80
Belgium F	63.20	58.24
Canada C	2.466	2.306
Cyprus Cyp	0.889	0.828
Denmark Kr	11.67	10.78
Finland Fmk	5.39	5.44
France F	10.22	9.44
Germany Dm	3.07	2.83
Greece Dr	522	483
Hong Kong \$	12.28	10.9
Iceland	129	112
Ireland P	1.21	1.12
Israel Sh	6.54	5.69
Italy Lit	3042	2805
Japan Yen	240.70	223.11
Malta	0.675	0.616
Netherlands Gld	3.468	3.173
New Zealand \$	3.19	2.95
Norway Kr	12.89	11.95
Portugal Esc	310.40	288.97
S Africa Rd	8.10	8.14
Spain Pta	258.64	239.85
Sweden Kr	13.50	12.50
Switzerland Fr	2.57	2.35
Turkey Lira	40791	40013
USA \$	1.737	1.594

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Historically, the Duke of Westminster has kept his financial interests behind a veil of secrecy but his plans to expand abroad require greater transparency and The Sunday Times has gained access to details of the interests that make up Britain's top property fortune...

Business, The Sunday Times tomorrow

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A mutual field of dreams



COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

A funny old week for mutuals. Nationwide Building Society admitted that it was worried lest rebels trying to convert it from mutual to plc status could triumph this year in some horrible night of the carpetbaggers. In the City, Peter Morgan, chairman of the fiercely mutual National Provident Institution, was faced at its annual meeting with angry policyholders demanding their share of a putative £1.5 billion conversion. This windfall might compensate them for the recent under-performance of NPI funds, the inevitable result of taking a cautious line in a bull market that has endured far longer than so many of us expected.

Fear not, however. In Bourne-mouth the much-shrunken Building Societies Association held its annual conference in circumstances where toasts to absent friends could easily end up as a pub crawl. But delegates were fortified in a more uplifting way by the words of Frank Field, the Social Security Minister and would-be architect of the new welfare state.

"It would be hard to underestimate the contribution that mutual institutions have made to the United Kingdom over the past 250 years," Mr Field's speech read. Fortunately, for those present, he meant the opposite.

People have lost confidence in both the State and the financial services industry as competent providers in time of need, he

argued "or as trustworthy guardians of savings and investment". Mr Field argued that individuals could take control of their own affairs to insure against disasters, which must include sickness and unemployment, and to smooth income over their lifetime, which means pensions. But "handing welfare services over to the private sector would be unacceptable". Mutual institutions, which include building societies, trade unions, friendly societies and co-operatives, should fill the gap.

Mr Field is not to be criticised. He symbolises the sacred third way. But if this is what he thinks, then government policy on welfare and stakeholder pensions is in as big a mess as ever.

Nostalgia for friendly societies produced one of the many oddities of the individual savings account. The idea that only mutual organisations can be trusted with stakeholder pensions — especially if Tony Blair mistakenly backs compulsion — is daft. Organisations such as trade unions can be umbrellas for group pensions, but these are sensibly bought from commercial providers, mutual or no.

By extension, this must also be true of any insurance element of

welfare. Mr Field seems to think that small mutual organisations truly responsible to their members can work more flexibly and more humanely. But building societies are no longer groups of yeomen meeting in Birmingham upper rooms. Nor are they likely to return to those days.

Mutuals can have a strong part to play, but only if their status results in their members getting a better deal. Nostalgia will not bring the new Jerusalem.

that the draft press release had been prepared.

The answer is that the Unigate team eventually got sight of the current trading picture at Hillsdown and their enthusiasm for the deal instantly evaporated. It is hard to imagine what scared them so, since only a couple of weeks ago Hillsdown was telling its shareholders that there had been "a positive start to the year". There was a blithe assurance that "current trading is in line with expectations". That hackneyed phrase does beg the vital question as to what those expectations might be and, on Hillsdown's recent record, they should not have been too jolly. Yet it would seem that the figures which were prised out of Sir John Nott's grasp were not exactly what the Unigate team had been expecting.

Whether Martin and Buckland were unreasonable in their expectations will only become apparent when Hillsdown has to lay bare its trading news for all to see. If at that stage the stock market echoes Unigate's reaction, then chairman Sir John Nott and his advisers may find themselves with a little explaining to do.

Yesterday, the Hillsdown camp was brushing aside any aspersions on its business and trying instead to cast doubt on Unigate's ability to carry through the deal. But, while some investors had been wary of buying the motley bag of businesses that is Hillsdown, Martin and Buckland had the underwriting and banking lined up. They had had plenty of time to get to examine the company and its components and, to the surprise, and dismay of some investors, were still insisting that Unigate would enjoy an instant earnings enhancement from buying the company. Until that late night surprise.

The negotiations had not been easy. Having lost his incumbent finance director last month,

when Hillsdown announced its complicated demerger plans, and with chief executive George Greener working out his notice, it fell largely to the irascible Sir John Nott to do the deal. There had always seemed a possibility that he would repeat his famous television performance and walk off the set. It may have been less worrying had he done so.

Blank looks at Mirror

Next week should bring confirmation that Victor Blank is to be the next chairman of Mirror Group. The seasoned deal-doer, until recently chairman of Charterhouse Bank, is a fine choice to head up a business being sized up by potential bidders.

Blank was instrumental in the ground-breaking bid that turned the moribund Woolworths into today's Kingfisher and made his fortune in the process. If Mirror Group is to lose its independence, Blank could be relied upon to ensure that it only does so at a good price. But he may not be heading to Canary Wharf with the intention of a short but profitable reign. Whether or not

David Montgomery has tired of the struggle over deciding where Mirror should go next, Blank is likely to have plans for presiding over an expanding media group, not just negotiating a quick sale.

Axel Springer's tantalising admission that it is considering a bid for Mirror shows no rush in progressing towards an offer. The Takeover Panel may wait a few weeks before putting on the pressure. Yet Springer faces a quandary for the likelihood is that the company is not interested in long-term ownership of the group's regional papers. Selling those would almost certainly bring a Monopolies Commission inquiry.

Blank knows that, at the right price, Mirror shareholders, like any others, can be bought. He may have some intriguing ideas for persuading them that that price is higher than Mr Springer may care to risk.

Not Baring up

ING may soon find a Dutch equivalent of the Yorkshire phrase "too pricey at now" to describe the purchase of Barings. The Dutch bought a firm with Far East expertise ahead of a Far East crisis, and with a team of rainmaking financiers who have just walked out. Now Arjun Mathrani, the chief executive, is resigning after only five months. If ING does not act fast all that may be left is a City building and some redundant Daimlers.

Yorkshire Water sees debt grow on network spending

YORKSHIRE WATER saw its debt climb last year as the company, which became notorious in the 1995 drought for water shortages, pumped more cash into network improvements.

Earnings rose from 30.4 per cent to 40.4 per cent last year and Kevin Bond, managing director, said the level should rise to more than 60 per cent by 2000. He said: "We're conscious of the fact that we're going to have a significant number of additional commitments in capital spend between 2000 and 2005."

The company is now spending £1 million a day on developing its services and environmental standards. By 2000 it will have spent £1.8 billion on investment.

At the height of Yorkshire's



Bond: gearing will rise

troubles three years ago the company was leaking more than a third of its water. The company would not reveal how much water still leaks from its pipes and reservoirs but said that it is ahead of targets set for it by the industry regulator, Ian Byatt.

Mr Byatt has set companies targets based on the number of megalitres that escape from the system, a move that has made companies reluctant to say how many megalitres are in the system.

Brandon Gough, the chairman who was brought into Yorkshire two years ago, said: "The regulated water business was able to demonstrate substantial improvements in levels of customer service, while achieving a satisfactory financial performance."

Record for London Pride beer

THE nationwide advance of London Pride beer has generated record profits for Fuller, Smith & Turnbull, the restaurant and brewing group (Fraser Nelson writes).

New public-owned houses and agreements with national pub chains pushed sales of the beer up 14 per cent in the year to March 28, making it the group's star performer.

After opening more pubs and restaurants — including a Birmingham free house which sells more London Pride than anywhere else in the UK, underlying profits rose to £12.8 million (£11.6 million).

After £979,000 loss on property disposals, earnings were 35.4p (30.1p). A final dividend of 7.75p makes a total of 11.35p (10.03p).

Sale windfall for Wise Speke chiefs

EXECUTIVES at Wise Speke, the Newcastle-based agency stockbroker, are set to pocket £11 million in bonus payments following its sale yesterday to Brewin Dolphin.

Brewin Dolphin, one of the UK's largest investment managers, is paying £24 million for Wise Speke. The deal is being financed through a £24.5 million share placement.

The bonuses, to be paid in Brewin Dolphin shares, are dependent on growth in revenues and discretionary funds under management over the next two to three years.

Yesterday's deal boosts funds under management at Brewin Dolphin by £25 billion to £12 billion.

John Hall, managing director of Brewin Dolphin, said the combination of the two businesses would result in annual cost savings of at least

Receivers called in at Hollas

HOLLAS, the textile group, asked its bankers to appoint administrative receivers yesterday (Our City Staff writes). The shares had earlier been suspended at 24p, an all-time low.

Ian Powell and Steven Pearson of Price Waterhouse were appointed as receivers. Two Hollas subsidiaries, Edward MacBean and Hollas Hosiery, are also going into receivership.

All the other subsidiaries were said to be operating normally, including Textilion and Hollas Garments.

For the last year that results were available Hollas turned in a loss of £1.5 million on sales of £97.7 million, a recovery from losses in the previous year of £8.7 million.

Bae to form joint venture with French

BRITISH AEROSPACE is to form a joint venture with Dassault, the French aircraft industry, in a move partly designed to highlight the recent quickening of industry restructuring in France.

The companies already collaborate on research into fighter aircraft technology, having each signed a memorandum of understanding in 1995.

This loose alliance will now become a formal joint venture, registered in the UK and employing up to 80 engineers at Bae's site in Warton, Lancashire.

An industry source said it is not necessarily the case that this would mean the companies will now collaborate on a new-generation fighter.

Dassault, through its Rafale jet, and Bae, through Eurofighter, are currently going head-to-head for government orders. This has been widely criticised as needless competition by advocates of a consolidated European aircraft industry and it is highly unlikely that it will happen again, given the pace of restructuring.

Bae and Dassault could share research on upgrades to Eurofighter and Rafale and there is scope for major collaboration on the possible replacement for the Tornado GR1 strike aircraft, which is unlikely to come into service until 2015 to 2020.



Lord Weinstock paid £5.16 million for shares in Mallett

Mallett price lifted by Weinstock 29.9% stake

SHARES in Mallett, the antique furniture and art dealer, rose from 102½p to 122½p after the company disclosed that Lord Weinstock had acquired a 29.9 per cent stake in the company for £5.16 million.

Mallett told the stock market that Lord Weinstock had bought the shares from Harrods Holdings and that the former managing director of GEC regarded the investment as a long term stake.

The company said that Lord Weinstock had bought the 4.13 million shares at 125p each. Mallett said: "Lord Weinstock has been well known to the company for many years and the board of Mallett therefore welcomes him as a major shareholder."

Mallett caters for the top end of the antique market. Clients can spend up to £1 million on a single piece of furniture.

Tring crisis deepens after SE censure

THE crisis at Tring International deepened yesterday after the budget CD company was told by the London Stock Exchange that it violated listing rules by selling its main warehouse without consulting shareholders.

The company, whose shares are suspended at 6½p, has been "publicly censured" — one of the Stock Exchange's harshest forms of rebuke — for pushing through the £1.6 million sale of its Aylesbury property.

Although Tring held an EGM in February to approve the disposal, the LSE pointed out that the unconditional sale was agreed a month earlier — making any vote meaningless.

Steven Porter, finance director, said: "When we agreed the disposal, we were under immense pressure from our banks. We were in a state of panic, and only later realised that we had broken the rules."

He added that the company's bank remains "very nervous" after its plans for a rescue fundraising were rejected three weeks ago.

He said: "We thought they would have an alternative idea, but they don't. The management have been left holding the baby."

The company is still trading, although it is having difficulty in securing anything on credit. The Stock Exchange does not intend to take any further action.

Pattullo powerless over Knoydart

SIR BRUCE PATTULLO, in one of his last acts as Governor of the Bank of Scotland, yesterday said the bank could do nothing to stop Stephen Hinchliffe, the controversial Sheffield businessman, taking over a famous Scottish estate.

The outgoing Governor, who handed over to Sir Alistair Grant at the end of yesterday's annual meeting in Edinburgh, was responding to protests by representatives of the residents of Knoydart, the West of Scotland estate.

They are angry about the takeover of

Knoydart by Mr Hinchliffe and Christopher Harrison, an associate, both of whom are being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office and prosecuted by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The bank has lent £1.4 million to Knoydart Peninsular, the company that owns the estate and whose shares are now owned by a company controlled by Mr Hinchliffe and Mr Harrison.

Since taking control Mr Hinchliffe has sacked Ian Robertson, the estate manager, and has held a meeting with representatives of the 70 residents of the estate. Following that meeting the resi-

dents passed a vote of no confidence in their new laird.

Sir Bruce said he had received letters about the new twist to the saga but told shareholders: "There has been a transfer of shares in Knoydart Peninsular Limited. The bank was not consulted. Customer confidentiality means it is not appropriate for me to say any more." Sir Bruce said he and his wife had often been hillwalking at the estate staying in "the wee hotel" not the big house.

Other recent visitors to the estate include Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

Russia needs approval from IMF more than it needs the Fund's cash

Off the rails

International rescue for Indonesia sets precedent for Moscow, says Janet Bush

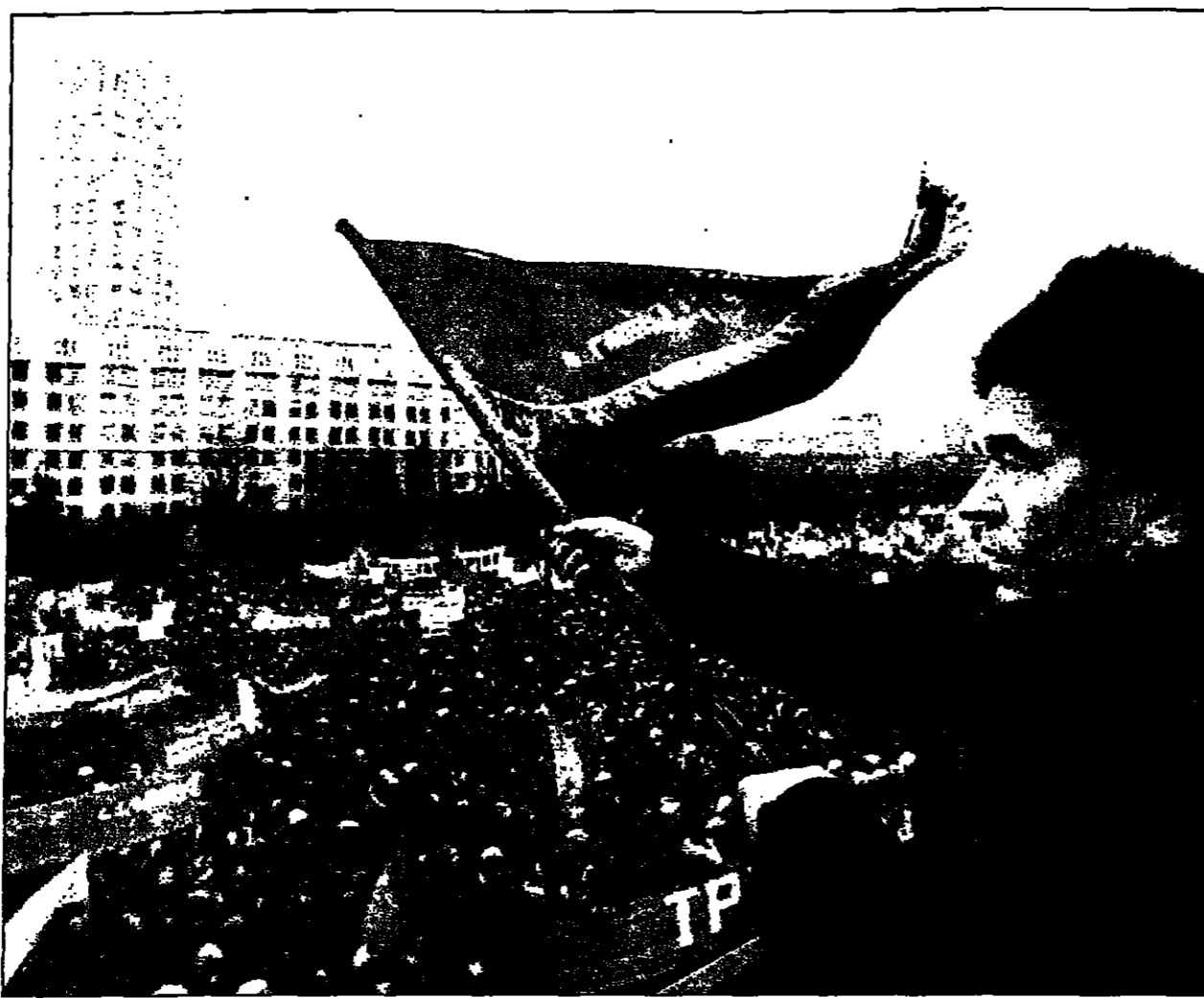
A young Muscovite teacher called Alla last week professed herself flummoxed about the current turmoil in Russia's financial markets. "People talk about Indonesia but what has that got to do with us?" she asked a Reuters reporter who was out on the streets of Moscow to gauge popular concern. "Indonesia is a long way away."

Yet high-stakes financial dramas are being played out in close parallel in both countries. Indonesia and Russia happen to be the two economies that are currently at the top of the International Monetary Fund's firefighting agenda. Their cases both throw up searching questions about the IMF's role in the Mexican wave of financial instability currently rolling around the globe.

Hubert Neils, the IMF's Asia Pacific director, was in Jakarta on Thursday to analyse whether Indonesia, a week after the toppling of President Suharto, is responsible enough for the Fund to resume payments under a \$41.2 billion (£25 billion) economic rescue package. Beyond that, he has to consider whether this substantial sum of money will be enough to stabilise confidence in Indonesia and allow it to start on the road to economic recovery.

At the same time, John Odling-Smee, the IMF's top Eastern European expert, arrived in Moscow to discuss whether Russia had done enough to put its public finances back on track and qualify for the next \$670 million tranche of a \$9.2 billion three-year extended financing facility. He agreed yesterday that it had.

In both cases, there is an ingrained assumption that only handouts from the IMF will save the day and that, because of the strategic interests of America, the IMF's largest



Moscow's difficulties include mass protests by demonstrators complaining that their salaries have not been paid

shareholder, the Fund will be found willing to dip once more into its rapidly depleting reserves of cash.

Both cases highlight the issue of moral hazard that has been most vociferously aired on Capitol Hill. Nationalist voices in both the Democratic and Republican parties have been blocking extra US funds to replenish IMF reserves, arguing that the American budget should not contribute to rescuing far-off countries that have mismanaged their affairs. Many argue that the very existence of the IMF and its bail-out billions is an incentive to bad behaviour.

Indonesia was supposed to be different. The IMF was determined to make private sector lenders pay for ill-judged loans, having failed to punish them in Korea and Thailand because the sheer speed of

events dictated an indiscriminate rescue. David Folkerts-Landau, former head of capital markets surveillance at the Fund, now head of emerging markets at Deutsche Bank, told *The Times* in February: "If the multilateral institutions and the G7 directly or indirectly support bail-out of private creditors in Indonesia, I would say that they have lost a very significant opportunity to impose discipline on the system."

The IMF has tried to play hardball with Indonesia but this tactic blew up in its face. Its insistence on cutting subsidies as a condition for loans has been widely blamed for sparking punitive price rises and the street protests that led to the toppling of President Suharto. It seems inevitable now that the IMF will swiftly resume pay-

ments to Indonesia, and on soft conditions, to reinforce a return to relative political stability. This brings us to Russia. Strange as it may seem to a Moscow teacher, recent events in Indonesia virtually guarantee that Russia will be bailed out of its current difficulties, which include Moscow being flooded with demonstrators complaining that they have not been paid. Far from being to blame for Russia's problems, Indonesia may come to be seen as its saviour.

If political stability in Indonesia is deemed worth paying billions for, how much more money would the IMF and its American backers be prepared to spend on Russia, in whose reform process the West has invested so much capital and which is still, after all, a nuclear power? Even the most die-hard congressional critics of

IMF rescues will find it hard to argue against help for Russia. Its politicians were clearly milking their special status last week. On the day of Mr Odling-Smee's arrival, Oleg Vyugin, Deputy Finance Minister, said that the next \$670 million tranche would not be enough to solve the country's economic problems. He said that effective support would have to be on quite a different scale.

Speculation raged in the financial markets all last week about whether packages of new loans might be forthcoming. Figures of \$5 billion, \$10 billion or even \$20 billion were mentioned. Rudolf Edlinger, Austria's Finance Minister, said that his country, for one, would be prepared to back new IMF money. The IMF was not alone in the frame. Rumours abounded that Western governments

may be prepared to lend Russia a financial lifeline directly. On Thursday the IMF was still insisting that no new money was on the table and that the release of the \$670 million tranche still depended on satisfactory progress in Moscow on measures to boost its tax revenues, including improved tax collection.

However, as Korea, Thailand and eventually Indonesia demonstrated, the IMF will have little choice but to come up with the money and very soon, whether or not Russia commits itself to the reforms being demanded. Moral hazard is damned, the IMF has come to be seen as the only answer to financial crises and, at minimum, it must disburse its next tranche of money for the markets to stabilise.

The question is whether that will be enough. Opinion is split. Emerging markets economists at Credit Suisse First Boston believe that much damage has been done by the delay in disbursing the \$670 million. They said: "A considerably larger IMF package may now be needed. Time is pressing as the banking sector will be under pressure from these prohibitively high rates." They said it was vital to boost the central bank's foreign currency reserves from the \$14 billion cited on Thursday.

Keith Crane, director of research at PlanEcon, a Washington economic consultancy, said that, without more IMF money, the rouble will not hold, but he is confident that the Fund will provide considerable new funds, perhaps the \$10 billion being talked about in the markets. "I am fairly conservative and I would take bets on it," he said.

Others do not think the situation merits such a large new infusion of cash. Marcel Cassard, chief economist of the emerging markets group at Deutsche Bank, said that a swift announcement that the \$670 million will be disbursed, coupled with genuine measures to tackle Russia's budget deficit, should be enough to stabilise the markets. He said: "The announcement itself should be more than enough. Russia doesn't need the money as much as it needs the IMF's stamp of approval."

THE organiser of yesterday morning's artistic event on London Bridge, where commuters were asked to wear large cardboard ears and then nominated for the Turner Prize, is not without a sense of humour. "I suppose you're calling to ask me to become the next boss of British Biotech," says Anthony Samuelson when I introduce myself. He says his ultimate dream is to extend the event to the Apprentice Boys' march in Northern Ireland by asking them to wear Union Jack ears similar to those he handed out at the Proms last year.

"Then you really would know the Troubles were over," he enthuses. Well, yours certainly would be. "And then we could give them to the Hajj pilgrims in Mecca." The worrying thing is that a contact in the art world tells me he is serious.

EDWIN WATERHOUSE must be spinning in his grave. The great patriarch of Price Waterhouse would be horrified to learn that his name is losing the capital W, now Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand are to merge as PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Even worse, in the logo invented for the merger the jumbled waterhouse part looks as though it has been caught in a pile-up between Price and Coopers. Thus neatly reversing the historical realities because Edwin Waterhouse was the epitome of a Victorian gentleman. It was Sammy Price who used to return to the office bloodied from lunch-time punch-ups with the Fenians.

Roulette

BAD timing or counter-cyclical thinking? I see from the *Financial Times* that a "leading City-based international financial institution" is seeking an equity research analyst. This person will be making recommendations to clients on portfolio investments in metal and manufacturing in a certain country and maintaining client relationships.

Oh, and fluent Russian required, exceptional knowledge of Russian industry, and ideally an MBA. The salary is all of \$60,000, or less than £40,000, which won't go far in St Petersburg either.

DURING the course of a mis-spent youth I became



rather good at table football. (The trick is to be left-handed; you can slam them in from the centre.) So I must decline the challenge to take on the winner of a 32-team tournament on Monday night drawn from the venture capital world, as it would be a shame to spoil someone's evening.

The event is hosted by BPG Corporate Finance. The teams will each represent one of the sides taking place in the World Cup. So England will be Ivory & Sime. A Scottish firm, as it happens. Scotland are Barclays, which is English. Brazil are HSBC, from Hong Kong...

Handy guide

YOU know that the cult for management gurus has flipped completely out of control when the industry can support not only their flatterer textbooks but whole encyclopedias devoted to their works, so the stressed executive never actually has to read them. Two such hit my desk this week, which is either a coincidence of Koestlerian proportions or a grim warning of a flood of them yet to come.

Take your pick from *The Ultimate Business Guru Book*, a tipster through "50 Thinkers Who Made Management" or *Guide to the Management Gurus*, which somehow limits the field to just 40. I begin to warm to Stuart Crainer, the author of the first book, who not only cheats by including Sun Tzu and Machiavelli to make up his quota but in his acknowledgements thanks his publishers because they "continue to pick up the tab for lunch." But then I see that, on completing the first 50, he launches into another 50 also-rans. A hundred essential management gurus? Spare us.

MARTIN WALLER

How would you make money on your house without selling it?

- (a) Open the gardens up to the public?
- (b) Convert your garage into a theme park?
- (c) Rent the box room to a South American fugitive?
- (d) Re-mortgage with a Virgin One account?

Your home is usually the most valuable thing you possess, but if it goes up in value the only way you can get your hands on your profit is by selling it. With the Virgin One account you can get hold of that money whenever you want by just writing a cheque. And however you spend the money, you pay the same competitive rate of interest as your mortgage.

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A mutual friend poised for further defence of status

U ntil last summer few people outside the world of personal finance had heard of Brian Davis. He was merely the chief executive of a building society that even he once considered boring. That changed, suddenly and dramatically, when Nationwide found itself the target of a group of determined carpetbaggers bent on wringing windfalls of £1,000 out of the largest remaining society.

The battle between the board and the speculators became front page news, but in the event Davis won the day. Nationwide's three million-plus customers voted not with their pockets but with their principles, defeating the carpetbaggers by a margin of three to one. In the process, Davis became the champion of mutuality and the defender of more than 200 years of tradition, a role which he will have to revive in the next few weeks as Nationwide prepares itself for a fresh demutualisation vote.

It is not a role he cherishes. "I am no crusader. I am a businessman," Davis says. "It is just that I cannot see any reason why Nationwide should change its status. There is no business justification for it." He launches into a well-rehearsed argument with no shareholders, the society can offer better rates to savers and borrowers than its rivals on the stock market. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a more unlikely champion of the mutual cause. A chemist by education, he worked for 16 years in the oil industry, a sector hardly known for its ethical track record, before moving to the then sleepy building society sector.

Much of his early career was spent with Esso, the US firm which is a stickler for procedure and motivated purely by profit. The irony is not lost on Davis. "Working for building societies used to be different. I suppose, but these days they are just as efficient and ordered as ples. In that sense, there really is no difference now," he says. Perhaps because of his re-



Brian Davis says he is a businessman and not a crusader

luctance to act as mutuality's champion — he has attained the reputation virtually by default as his peers have taken the flotation route — Davis uses rather humdrum language to advance his arguments. This softly spoken, almost shy man believes that the facts, or rather the figures, speak for themselves.

His low-key approach has sometimes led others to describe him as dull. However, some mutual executives believe his ordinariness is almost a deliberate ploy not to unsettle the customers. After all, he does have a PhD in rocket science.

"Brian has this huge advantage: he has the touch of the common man," says one rival society executive. "He has no airs and graces, talks in simple language. He does not go for the flash, like the banks. Brian is in fact ever so ordinary. He understands that his customers do not like the flash."

There can be no doubt that Davis's image as an ordinary bloke, whether cultivated or not, was a tremendous help in defeating Michael Hardern, the self-styled king of the carpetbaggers and his main adversary last summer. While Davis tried to keep a discreet silence, Hardern — a freelance butler — courted the press, not always with positive results.

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Market-watchers believe these options could include a sale to a friendly buyer, rather than conversion. Possible takeover candidates include Lloyds TSB, the UK's biggest bank by market value, and HSBC Holdings, owner of Midland Bank. However, Mr Davis remains characteristically reticent on the matter. "We will look to get the best deal for our members."

And would he stand down? "I am relatively young at 53. One thing about being the chief executive of a building society is that you have to be re-elected every three years. That comes up again next year, which should take me through 2000. But if the vote is for conversion, well, it's like being the captain of ship. Just because it changes direction, you don't jump in the sea."

RICHARD MILES

IN THE HOT SEAT

CV: BRIAN DAVIS

Born 1944
BSc in chemistry, PhD in rocket fuel technology
1970: joins Esso (takes voluntary redundancy in 1986)
1987: deputy general manager (technology) of Nationwide
1994: chief executive
1996: chairman of Building Societies Commission
1997: defeats carpetbaggers

Struggling under reno

COMMODORE

LIFE OPER

سكزا من الأصل

STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK Stock Market Writer of the Year

Struggling Ionica comes under renewed pressure

TIME may be running out for Ionica Group, which has come under further selling pressure...



Sir Ian Prosser, chief executive of Bass, the drinks group

talks with Safeway, 5 1/2 p lower at 37 1/2 p, aborted last year. The speculators were also suggesting that Storehouse...

BSkyB retreated 9p to 43 1/2 p with the Premier League clubs voting to reject proposals to introduce pay-per-view television for league games.

Meisecc stood out with a jump of 30p at 25 1/2 p after agreeing terms of a £41.5 million cash bid for the Austrian steel products company Voestalpine Stahl.

Shortly after the shares hit 42 1/2 p at which level the company boasted a price tag of £70 million.

The equity market rounded off another difficult week on a steady note although prices closed well below their best levels of the day.

Opening losses on Wall Street unsettled investors and a 53-point lead in the FTSE 100 slipped away.

Total turnover was boosted by a large share placing in Queens Moat amounting to 167 million shares.

The collapse in bid talks between Unigate and Hillsdown left the latter 2 1/2 p cheaper at 18 1/2 p as 6.65 million shares changed hands.

It is thought Hillsdown will now proceed with plans to split its food processing and furniture operations in two.

Reports that merger talks between Kingfisher down 20p at £10.85, and Asda, 1p easier at 18 1/2 p, may be back on again created a ripple of excitement.

kill initial, was again being chased higher closing 8 1/2 p stronger at £12.70. This time, however, the rise is due to the group's inclusion as a constituent of the Morgan Stanley Capital Index next month.

Bass, 3 1/2 p better at £11.25, has also been favoured by Morgan Stanley. The US securities house has included the brewer in its buy list of

Queens Moat Houses rose 4 1/2 p to 36 1/2 p, with 167 million shares traded. Banque Nationale de Paris, which took equity in exchange for debt, has unloaded its holding of 62.2 million shares, or 16.08 per cent of the issued share capital.

FTSE 250 was Delancey Estates, which ended the day 4 1/2 p, or 46 per cent, better at 150p. The billionaire financier George Soros has selected the property munnaw as his next stock market vehicle and intends to pump £100 million into the business compared with the group's stock market valuation at the start of business yesterday of £23 million.

Compas Group, often tipped as a takeover target for Sir Clive Thompson's Rento-

Card Clear came in for profit taking after its recent strong run with the price dropping 9 1/2 p to 78p. The shares have come up from the 70p level during the past few weeks. Its subsidiary Inter Clear, which provides the equivalent of electronic signatures for financial transactions on the internet, is going great guns and is likely to overtake its parent company in terms of earnings growth.

Troubled British Biotech came in for fresh renewed selling with the price dropping 5 1/2 p to a new low of 48 1/2 p.

Due to technical difficulties at Liffe, the Options quoted below are Wednesday's prices.

MAJOR INDICES

Table with columns for Index Name, Value, and Change. Includes New York (midday), Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London, and FTSE 100.

RECENT ISSUES

Table listing recent issues with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes Ambient Media, Ambius Pub Co, Asda, BTR Red P/B, Baronsmead VCT 2, etc.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Table listing rights issues with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes Ask Central n/p (350), John Lusty n/p (10), etc.

MAJOR CHANGES

Table listing major changes with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes EVE Group, Enigma, Brown Dolphin, etc.

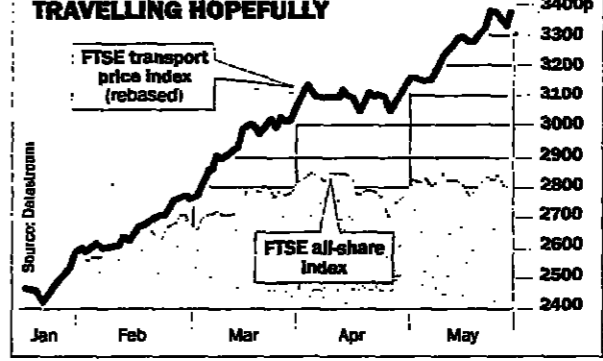
TEMPUS Cleaning itself up

IT WILL be a long time before Yorkshire Water crawls out of the doghouse but at least it has made a start.

will have invested £1.8 billion since 1995. This spending has increased gearing from 30 per cent to 40 per cent this year, but it still has one of the strongest balance sheets in the sector.

ONLY two weeks away from the Government's White Paper on transport, and the City is more bullish than ever about the prospects for Britain's privatised bus and rail companies.

wages back up and the scope for acquisitions is diminishing. A reversal of the 20-year decline in passenger volumes is the only hope.



Goldshield

FROM a standing start with next to no capital in 1991, Goldshield Group has built a pharmaceutical marketing business that it hopes to float for £55 million next week.

should not be so prevalent after the poor timing of his recent investment in The Eastern Group. So it is with some scepticism that one views his £100 million bet on the UK property sector at this stage in the cycle.

Whether you believe the Halifax or the Nationwide - or indeed Mervyn King's wisdom of Solomon who said that real house price inflation lies somewhere between the two main indices - it is hard to see the housing sector continuing to grow at the rate it has over the past half decade.

Delancey invests in residential property - mostly rented flats - and has had a chequered career in producing good returns for investors. Soros' money will be used to diversify into the commercial sector, but a 46 per cent leap in the share price yesterday indicates the market still believes Soros has his tragic touch. Do not bet on it.

Delancey

THE assumption that George Soros knows something everyone else does not

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices including COCOA, ROBUSTA COFFEE, WHITE SUGAR, MEAT & LIVESTOCK.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Table listing stock movers with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes Halifax, Mirror Group, Charlton Athletic, etc.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of London financial futures including Long Gilt, German Govt Bond, Italian Govt Bond, etc.

MONEY RATES (%)

Table of money rates for various currencies and terms.

OTHER STERLING

Table of other sterling rates for various countries and currencies.

WALL STREET

Table of Wall Street stock prices and changes.

LIFFE OPTIONS

Table of Liffe options for various commodities and terms.

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

Table of London metal exchange prices for various metals.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Table of European money deposit rates for various currencies.

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Table of gold and precious metal prices.

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Table of sterling spot and forward rates for various currencies.

FTSE VOLUMES

Table of FTSE 100 trading volumes for various companies.

NEWS

Labour U-turn on school opt-out

Labour is planning to complete the process of allowing schools to opt out of local authority control which it fought against bitterly when in opposition. The transformation in the running of state schools was announced by ministers in a move seen as completing the Conservative goal of ending town hall control of education. Pages 1

Surgeons were not up to the job

Two surgeons who ignored repeated warnings that they were clinically incompetent continued to carry out complicated heart operations during which 29 babies died, the General Medical Council said. A third doctor, who had the authority to stop them at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, failed to do so. Pages 1, 3

Tourism's loss

The Government wants to axe the 30-year-old English Tourist Board, which promotes the £20 billion domestic tourism market, to save money. Page 1

Viagra suit

A woman, 63, is suing her 70-year-old partner who eloped with a younger woman after taking the potency pill Viagra. Page 1

In-cell television

The Government is to provide thousands more prisoners with in-cell television. Page 2

Lawyer in the limelight

Elaine Whitfield-Sharp, a member of the Louise Woodward legal defence team, has usurped the British au pair's place at the centre of the stage. Page 5

No regrets

Emperor Akihito ended his state visit, with his staff insisting that the trip had not been spoiled by the PoWs' protests. Page 16

Spice Girls lose dash without Ginger

Did Posh, Sporty, Scary, Baby and Ginger — especially Ginger — have a row on the way back from Helsinki? The claims are that Ginger stormed off and the Spice Girls have split. If so, does that mean the end of the Spice Girls? Page 20

Bridge of glory

The first Severn road bridge received the accolade of a Grade I listing. Page 6

Who is fittest?

The race is on to find Britain's fittest man and woman. Competitors will have to take the X Zone challenge which is more demanding than a triathlon. Page 7

Yeltsin talks up rouble

President Yeltsin's tough action to deal with Russia's economic crisis has boosted the rouble. Page 13

Nuclear challenge

The challenge for the three Western nuclear powers is to ensure that neither Russia nor China will play any role in accelerating the arms race in South Asia. Page 15

Lottery Lords

A think-tank says peers should be chosen by a lottery draw as occurred in the cradle of democracy in Ancient Greece. Page 19



Artist Damien Hirst, right, supervised a giant spin painting on a billboard at London's Vauxhall Bridge by students of Rudolph Steiner School to promote a new single, *Vindaloo*, by comic Keith Allen, second from right, who predicted it will knock spots off other World Cup rival songs

NEWS FEATURES, OPINION, COLUMNS, BUSINESS, SPORT, OBITUARIES, LETTERS. Valerie Grove: Potentially, The Censor's Cuts is the hottest show in town. Yet only 15 people turned up to see it in Belfast. 35 in Glasgow, and 150 in Birmingham. The show is on the road to show Joe Public how and why films are graded. Page 21. Sex test: With French men obsessed with the World Cup, predictions are that the rate of adultery will rise during the tournament. Page 18. Which guide: Witches are back in eastern Europe and in the capitalist era, making good money. Page 17.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,805

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares for clues. Includes 'ACROSS' and 'DOWN' sections.

- ACROSS
1 Beetle comes to have a lasting effect on Jack (6).
5 Spectator's a weekly paper (5).
9 Police astride horses appearing promptly (4,4).
10 Old instrument in band without tuning peg (6).
11 Don't believe Duke is noble (8).
12 Swede, say, about to join golf club shortly (8).
13 University, with new advertisements, removes cause of stoppage (7).
16 Champion gets youngster into trouble (7).
20 Frank's girl nearly packed after first sign of trouble (6).
22 Elope with my excited sweetheart, one under firm control (8).
23 Fudge that's used in American biscuit (6).
24 Fruit useless for a pudding (4,4).
25 Soft and gentle as a woolly jumper (8).
26 Ravel's complicated mass (6).

Solution to Puzzle No 20799 and Solution to Puzzle No 20804. Includes words like UPTO THE MINUTE, HIDE AND SEEK, etc.

Last week's winners: I Macintyre, Isle of Barra; E Gough, Harrogate; Birmingham: A Thomas, Porton; Mid Glam: R Davies, Llanelli; N Wales: St Peter, Jersey.

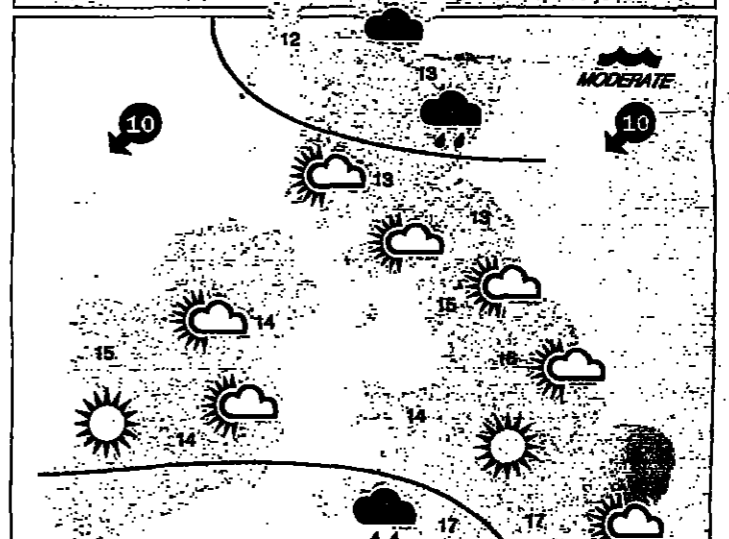
FORECAST

General: southern England will have some warm sunshine. Thunder rain will move into south west and the rest of the south may have thundery showers later. Scotland will be generally cloudy, with showery rain in south this morning. Northern Ireland and northern parts of England and Wales will be mostly dry.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions across various UK locations like Aberdeen, London, Manchester, etc. Columns include Sun, Rain, Fog, etc.

NOON TODAY



HOURS OF DARKNESS

Table showing sunrise and sunset times for various UK locations.

HIGH TIDES

Table showing high tide times for various UK locations.

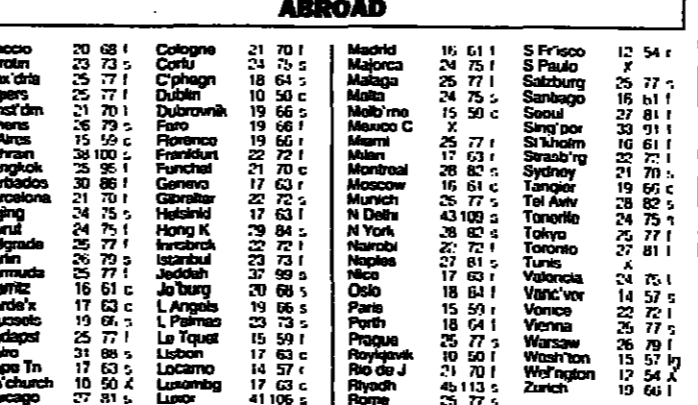
ABROAD

Table showing weather forecasts for various international cities like Madrid, Moscow, Tokyo, etc.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday's highest day temp. Harrogate, 12°C; lowest day temp. Dublin, 4°C. Lowest night temp. Harrogate, 1°C. Highest night temp. Harrogate, 15°C.

TEMPERATURE AT MIDDAY LOCAL TIME ON THURSDAY



SECTIONS

the times
Cover story: Rod Stewart, the original Jack-the-lad. Page 18.
Motown UK: Cars are big in Birmingham. Page 26.
Interiors: The ultimate studio flat. Pages 44-52.
Food: Pages 59-69.
Jean genes: Revamped denim. Pages 70-75.

metro

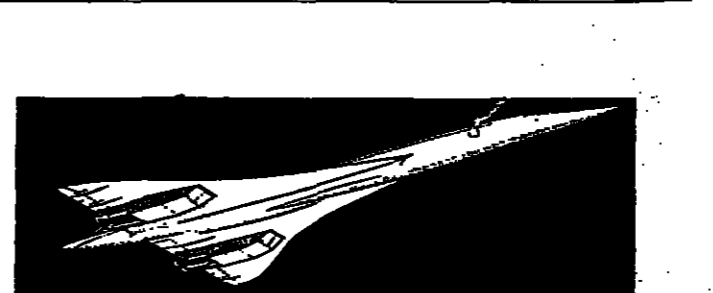
The Big Interview: Fashion photographer Juergen Teller. Page 6.
Music: Ultra cool Morcheeba. Pages 10-14.
Books: Football sales pitch. Pages 16-21.
Hip affair: A new Oxbridge ball game. Page 24.
Listings: Pages 26-43.

WEEKEND

Royal beat: Brian MacArthur admires the stamina of the Prince. Page 1.
Fashion: The best in black and white. Page 5.
Gardening: Formal beds in turf. Pages 15-18.
Faith: Stargazers can be Christians. Page 23.
Travel: Kenya; the Mekong; Picos. Pages 27-35.

Vision

Seven-day listing of radio and 40 TV channels.
Puzzles and prizes for younger readers.



TORONTO OR NEW YORK
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QE2 WITH CONCORDE

Concorde supersonic to Tenerife on 16 June • four night QE2 cruise to Southampton via Madeira • Orient-Express to Victoria £1,699

Orient-Express to Victoria on 20 July • eleven night QE2 Land of the Midnight Sun cruise via the Norwegian Fjords to Bergen • Concorde return £2,999

Concorde supersonic to Bergen on 31 July • four night QE2 cruise to Southampton via Orkney islands and Edinburgh • Orient-Express to Victoria £1,699

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Gasco England advertisement with large text and a small image of a person.

TOUR GUIDE

Hansie Cronje on leading South Africa PAGE 38



LOVE LAWN

The game for swinging lovers PAGE 41



DANNY BAKER

Selling football by the pound PAGE 35



WEEKEND MONEY

WHO PAYS WHEN HIRED CLOTHES GET TRASHED? PAGE 64



go

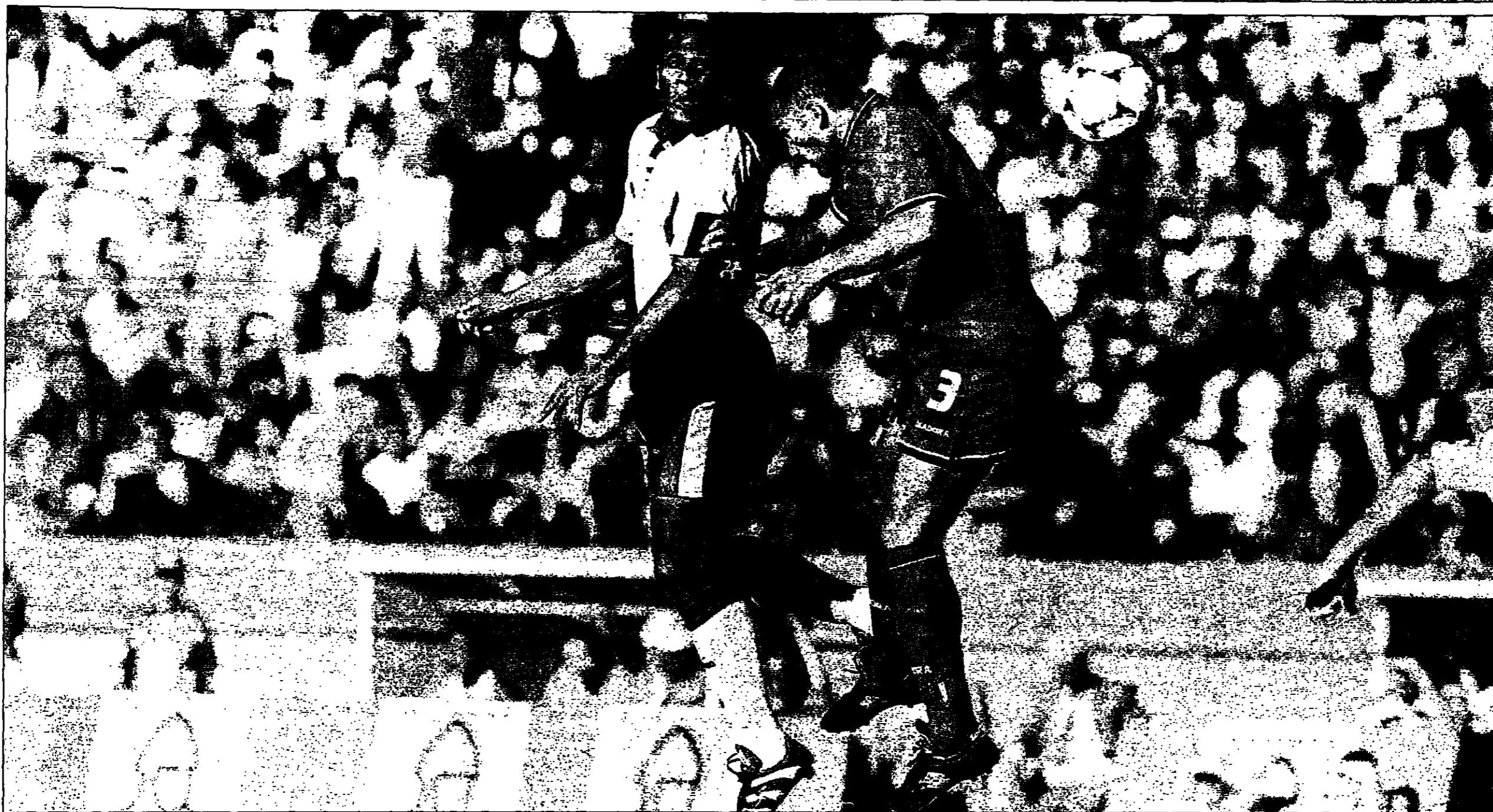
A SIDECAR NAMED DESIRE PAGE 51



THE TIMES SATURDAY SPORT 14 PAGES

MAY 30 1998

GARY NEVILLE ON THE ROAD TO FRANCE - PAGE 37



Les Ferdinand rises high to beat Van Meir, the Lierse defender, to the ball in the first half of England's uninspiring goalless draw against Belgium in Casablanca last night. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Gascoigne hobbles off in England's final rehearsal

Belgium0
England0

FROM OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT
IN CASABLANCA

ENGLAND were last night involved in a double injury scare as they meandered their way to a lacklustre draw with Belgium here in their final World Cup warm-up game. After Thursday's withdrawal of Ian Wright from contention, Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, was forced to watch first Paul Gascoigne limp off after a heavy first-half tackle and then Sol Campbell had to be substituted after being brought crashing to the floor during a surging run midway through the second half.

Hoddle had at least ensured that this anticlimactic match, played out in a stadium that was only about a quarter-full, would be remembered for one statistic when he made Campbell the youngest England player to lead out the team since Bobby Moore captained England against Czechoslovakia in 1963. The game was played almost at a snail's pace, with occasional bursts of freneticism from the Belgium forward, Emile Mpenza, and from an apparently rejuvenated Gascoigne. The Belgians, though, included only two of their likely starting line-up for the World Cup and much of the interest for English supporters lay in trying to assess the significance of Hoddle's team selection.

Hints and suppositions were read into every choice, both of those picked to start the game and those told that they would play no part. At first, it seemed that the inclusion of Andy Hinchcliffe in the latter group among players of the calibre of David Seaman, Tony Adams and Paul Ince

boded well for his chances of making the final 22. But it later emerged that he had sustained an injury in training on Thursday.

For others, their places in the starting line-up may well have been a distinctly mixed blessing, more of a last hurrah than a last chance. Just as Terry Venables played Dennis Wise and Ugo Ehiogu in the last warm-up game before the 1996 European championship and then omitted them both from the squad, the same may apply to Robert Lee. Paul Merson and Les Ferdinand, who all began last night's game here.

England's national anthem was roundly booed by the home crowd

before the game because Hoddle and his squad, alone among the four nations competing here in the King Hassan II international tournament, chose to return to Spain in the two days between their matches rather than remain in Morocco. The hostility continued throughout the game.

Whether it was because of that or the unfamiliar look of the team, England were second-best for much of the first half. Merson, in particular, seemed tentative and wore the air of a man who knew his chance had already gone.

The best chances of the half all fell to Belgium, the first coming in the ninth minute when Boffin broke

through but missed his kick as he bore down on Martyn. Thirteen minutes later, Mpenza pounced on a mistake by England's 23-year-old captain midway inside his own half and advanced on Martyn. This time, the Leeds goalkeeper had to make a save and pushed the forward's left-foot shot round the post.

Three minutes after that, Mpenza beat the offside trap to run onto a clever through-ball from De Boeck. The ball bounced up off his boot and, as he leapt to try to head it in, Martyn managed to snatch it away from him.

In the second half, Hoddle abandoned the 4-4-2 formation that he had started with for the first time as an

international manager and reverted to the 3-5-2 formation he has favoured. He brought on Rio Ferdinand for Phil Neville and Michael Owen for Gary Neville and pulled Merson back into midfield.

Despite the glut of changes, England seemed far more assured at the start of the second period. But they suffered a blow five minutes into it when Gascoigne was forced to submit to what appeared to be a recurrence of his ankle injury.

Already bandaged about the head after a high kick from Scifo, he was then fouled by Borkelmans late in the first half and never seemed to recover properly. He limped off at half-time and it only took five minutes of the second half for him to realise that it would be foolish to continue.

Beckham, though, proved an able deputy and, after Van Meir had been booked for a mistimed tackle on Owen that was more a tribute to the pace of the young Liverpool forward than an indictment of the ineptitude of the defender, Le Saux managed England's first serious attempt on goal when he dummed his way past a defender and forced Van der Walde to tip the ball over the bar.

Merson, looking happier now in midfield, had a shot charged down in the 63rd minute and five minutes later his fierce volley dipped just over the crossbar.

ENGLAND (3-4-3): P van der Walde (Aalsi) - E Dalkunde (FC Brugge), E van Meer (Lierse), M Verstraen (Ghent) - G Vanuytven (FC Brugge), G de Boeck (Anderlecht), E Scifo (Anderlecht), V Borkelmans (FC Brugge) - M Goossens (Schakard), M Mpenza, Standard Liege, 40mm, E Mpenza (Standard Liege), D Boffin (FC Metz).
ENGLAND (3-4-2): N Martyn (Leeds Utd) - G Neville (Manchester Utd), sub, M Owen, Liverpool, 49, M Kieren (Aston), S Cornhill (Tottenham Hotspur), sub, D Dublin, Coventry City, 75, P Neville (Manchester Utd), sub, R Ferdinand, West Ham Utd, 49 - R Lee (Newcastle Utd), P Gascoigne (Middlesbrough), sub, D Beckham, Manchester Utd, 49, N Butt (Manchester Utd), B Le Saux (Chelsea) - L Ferdinand (Tottenham Hotspur), P Merson (Middlesbrough).
Referee: E Aguiar (Morocco).

Chelsea lure Casiraghi for £5.4m

By DAVID MADDOCK

PAY-PER-VIEW may have been temporarily repelled, but the invasion of foreign footballers continues apace, with the transfer yesterday of Pierluigi Casiraghi from Lazio, Italy, to Chelsea. The 29-year-old Italy forward has cost the London club a record fee of £5.4 million. At a news conference yesterday to announce his transfer, Casiraghi confessed a lifelong admiration for English football, an opinion possibly enhanced by the fact that he has signed a four-year contract worth in excess of £15 million per year.

The forward renews a relationship with Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, that stretches back to 1993, when, ironically, Vialli replaced his younger rival in the Juventus side. The pair have played together at international level, although neither will travel to France for the World Cup finals.

"We are signing a player of

proven international quality at a reasonable price," Vialli said yesterday. "I know what he can do and I know he can succeed in English football. He is quick, strong and good in the air."

For his part, Casiraghi confessed that the move could not come quickly enough for him. He was looking for a transfer to England last summer, but Lazio stood in his way. "I am so happy that I have moved to England. I think the football here is excellent," he said. "Of course, the fact that there are Italians at the club helped me to make the decision. They are my friends and I spoke with them about the club, about the city and about life in England. They are very impressed and they impressed me. I am friends with Gianluca and I would like to play alongside him

again - although I don't know what I will call him now, maybe Mr Vialli."

Middlesbrough, Blackburn Rovers and Liverpool had all expressed an interest in the player, but for Casiraghi the lure of Oxford Street and the foreign legions at Stamford Bridge proved to be strongest of all.

He may not be the last of Chelsea's continental signings this season, either. They have shown an interest in Marcel Desailly, the France defender and midfield player, and the 29-year-old said yesterday that he will talk to the London club once more before making a decision on a move.

"I have spoken to both Liverpool and Chelsea and I will decide over the next week where my next move will be," Desailly said. "I am impressed by both clubs and I hope to play in England."

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The offer applies to 30th June 1998. Minimum opening balance to qualify for the service is £30 + VAT. The free minutes cannot exceed a value of £15 + VAT. All free minutes must be used within 30 days of opening the account. The offer is not open to existing accounts holders. Reference: E Aguiar (Morocco).

هكذا من الأصل

Mystery of Bontcho's King's Cross caper

Have had a tremendous reaction to an appeal for signings of professional footballers wearing their kits outside of genuine club duties. Famous non-victim Neil Lennon sets the standard early on with an actual change of strip while on a recent holiday in the Caribbean.

It seems that early risers could have seen Neil selecting Bran Flakes and grapefruit segments from the breakfast buffet while brazenly wearing the shirt and shorts of Leicester City. So startling was this advertising that the more cynical football element at the three-star stop began circulating the plausible alternative that only a bogus Neil Lennon would be quite so gauche.

However, that evening jaws drop even further as he returns to the dining room for some swordfish and taramisio this time in white slacks and a bona-fide Northern Ireland shirt complete with tell-tale creases where it has been folded for the packing case.

My correspondent says he affected a coincidental trip to the toilets with this still unconfirmed professional during which he took a moment to ask "Are you Neil Lennon, then?" to which the shameless showboater replied, "Yes... yes I am."

A rather more shaky sighting

DANNY BAKER



has David Platt — who always seems to pop up, whatever category you explore — exiting D.H. Evans in London's Oxford Street wearing a Hawaiian shirt, garish Bermuda shorts and a pair of Arsenal away socks rolled down to his Reeboks.

By far the most complete and perplexing tale though concerns

Bontcho Guenchev, of Luton. Two people called Steve and Graham had attended the Crystal Palace fixture against Luton at Selhurst Park despite the fact they had to leave early in order to attend a function in North London.

Some 30 minutes before the final whistle, they left their seats and set off on the complicated journey across the capital. However, all the connections clicked and they made splendid time. They were reflecting on this as they made their way 50 minutes later up the escalator at King's Cross underground station.

When the most incredible thing happened. Loping up the left-hand lane, so to speak, head down and muttering repeated "Excuse me" came Bontcho Guenchev.

The same Bontcho Guenchev they had left embroiled in a neatly balanced first-division fixture across London less than an hour previously. Even if he had been substituted moments after Steve and Graham had left the stadium, he must have run like the wind because Steve and Graham noticed me they would have advised a Bontcho Guenchev on their previous transports thus far.

Particularly this Bontcho Guenchev because this Bontcho Guenchev was still in his full kit and covered in mud. True, he had paired long enough to slip on a pair of trainers and they supposed

his boots were in the dark green Body Shop carrier bag that dangled at his side, but this slight nod in the direction of convention was hardly enough.

Here, while every other footballer in Britain was only just stepping into the sunken bath to soothe away the lumps and bumps of professional combat and probably striking up the off-colour songs, was one of their number legging it like fury up the stairs of a metropolitan Tube station in full and soiled dress uniform.

What on earth was going on? Steve and Graham naturally gave chase. What they witnessed only deepens the mystery. Guenchev hastened through the ticket barrier and out to the cab rank, where he was noisily greeted in a foreign tongue by another man. This man, if S & G are to be believed, was in a formal but light coloured suit and sported a heavy black cape. A cape, sir!

So let us consider the image. We have a famous footballer still in his full kit and caked in mud not 20 minutes after giving of 100 per cent standing side by side with a babbling man wearing a cape in a North London cab rank. Now there's good two-piper, eh Holmes?

I need hardly tell you that other sightings of Off Duty Kits you may have will be treated in the slackest confidence.



Kit packed: How Leicester's Neil Lennon might have looked on the beach during his "getting away from it all" holiday

This phoney warm-up shows we're not in the real world

How can they keep charging full price for admission to these pre-World Cup walkabout matches? If entrance was but a pound a head, then these dreary, slack-tempo training sessions might be generously considered the equivalent of watching a boxer sparring before a big fight, but HQ persist in the notion that we are witnessing bona fide fixtures and must view them every bit as seriously as the group matches themselves.

Talk about vanity. These games are awful, were always going to be awful and always will be awful. I would much prefer it if, like boxers, the international squads vanished from view to security-guarded, mountain-top retreats. There, teams like Leicester City, Bristol City and Arbroath could be bussed in to provide the meat in mysterious games where all the evaluating of team, talent and fitness might be assessed without fuss and theatrics.

I would find it much more heartening if a simple note was pinned to the high metal door at camp entrance each sundown revealing to the outside world that the final score in today's match was England 26 Port

Danny Baker is on Talk Radio (1053-1089am) every Saturday at 11.30am and 5.30pm.

Hitching up to pay-per-view trailer

On Thursday, I put on Teletext to see the screen aglow with the news that next season certain matches on Sky Television would be pay-per-view. It may not have been confirmed yesterday, but it is certain it will. Seeing as Sky subscribers already pay to do just that, what they mean is, of course, Pay Even More Per View, but the phrase Pay Even More Per View would make the people concerned sound like a gang of grasping, high-handed, fish-eyed pirates and it would be hard to put a positive spin on such an image — even with a high-octane goal montage and a pumping track by Robbie Williams.

I have never had a problem with Sky's money for matches before — their coverage is lush and defini-

te — but this new enclosure will be tantamount to hiding matches and blackmailing punters for use of the key. The only club named as among "The Big Four" in the venture so far is, naturally, Manchester United, but it's a fair guess that Arsenal are also a twitchin' at the snout as those wavy gray lines eventually emerge from this fresh trough. And yes, I, and countless others, will pony up the dough on cue in order to watch them play each other next season.

But who will the others be? Tottenham? No one's going to pay extra hard-earned to watch Tottenham, are they? Not even mad people, who, let's face it, are not even allowed to vote. Speaking of which, I dare say working-class

champion Ken Bates will consider his ridiculous caravan of lightweight narcissi something of an irresistible draw and it will be a very brave man at Sky who has to somehow get through to the bristling Cap'n that, outside of his Disney-style fantasy village existence, his team are in fact a laughing stock throughout the land and almost entirely responsible for the archaic term "pansies" appearing back in vogue.

As for clumsy Liverpool and wretched, wretched Newcastle, all I can resort to is quoting a grand old joke from the twilight years of music-hall. Here goes. You know figures show that Liverpool and Newcastle matches on Sky were responsible for 80 per cent of television sales last year. And

those who couldn't sell them gave them away. I Thank You!

In the end, though, it probably won't matter. The greatest weapons in the Sky armoury are its advertising trailers. They could sell a Sunday roast to Carla Lane. Before now, I've been suckered into viewing all kinds of dumbbell programmes with titles like When Sharks Attack, The World's Scariest Police Chases and A Conversation With Celine Dion. With a few fast zooms, shaking nets and a gravelly voice-over I can easily see myself falling for:

"Derby County were one of the most talked-about sides last year. Now they face their ultimate test in the quest for early season mid-table safety. Because Derby are coming... to West Ham!" (Cue *Two Tribes* by Frankie Goes to Hollywood and huge sequence of fast-cut action featuring men sliding on their behinds putting the ball out for throw-in.)

"West Ham! They tailed off last season... now someone's got to pay! This classic grudge fixture comes exclusively to Sky Television this Sunday for a special price of £24.99! No need to phone — just blink your eyes twice and well do the rest. It's West Ham v Derby — Live And For Cash! Your Mother's Operation Can Wait... Man, I'm over the World Cup already..."

Paying the penalty for a lack of vision

Waking on Bank Holiday Monday, I am in the grip of an unusually strong feeling of well-being, where the snail is on the thorn, the lark on the wing and everything's for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Rousing the house, I announce today is a perfect day for one of the famous Baker family mystery tours, which excites everyone, despite the fact we always end up in Folkestone.

Picnic packed, maps consulted, I am set and in the Land Rover by 8.15am, which is a shame because my wife doesn't announce herself ready to leave until just after 11.

The weather is with us, James Taylor sings agreeably in the tape player and the hat is on the side of my head as I draw up at the last lights before the M2 motorway and glorious Kent.

A lorry pulls up to my right. "Dropping the kids off Dan?" he beams. "No, no. Day out. Going to get lost in the lanes of the Garden

of England!" "Oh," he frowns, "don't fancy the play-off on telly this afternoon then?" And somewhere in my head an atom bomb goes off. I have to reveal that in Sunderland and Charlton took the nation to the brink of breathlessness in the penalty shoot-out after the 4-4 draw, I was pretending to show interest in some flower pots in a small garden centre just outside Sissinghurst, the famous stately home and woodlands, which, as I know now, doesn't open on Mondays, not even Bank Holiday ones.

It had started raining. I labour you with this atypical peek into my private life because ever since Monday people have hailed Charlton's triumph as the greatest game at Wembley since the World Cup and on four separate occasions it has been noted that nobody will ever forget where they were when Gray missed the fatal kick. I, however, shall try.

Vale is. Then I'd be confident there'd been some action, a top-ill-you-drop mentality, where, through the sheer length, familiarity and insanity of the fixture, minds had melded and partnerships matured.

They'd have laughed together, taken liberties, tried new things, relaxed and worked out. The idea that an international manager actually picks his squad on the evidence of a game like England v Saudi Arabia is preposterous, but all week I've heard people suggesting — and doing — just that. In fact, the past seven days can have served only to confuse views and plans that Glenn Hoddle must have had all but in concrete as far back as Rome in October.

Players should nude-wrestle, live wild in the woods, line dance — anything but take time out from actual preparation to float around in these airless public relations exhibition games. They depress everyone, players and supporters, and no matter how many high-blown titles you give the eventual phoney-balance trophy at stake, it's time we realised that, with the World Cup to prepare for, the friendly is a squad's worst enemy.

Francis ignores usual PC plod



I know, calm down, we all heard it. When Trevor Francis said, while commenting at the England game in Casablanca: "See, you've got to realise we're not capitalising on the psychology enough here. It's a fact that when England face Saudi Arabia or come to places like Morocco, they must know these people always feel inferior to us." Whoops, I think he meant to say "players". Still, if he didn't, what the hell, good for him! The World Cup needs its Howard Stern.

Kevin Eason on a man attempting to keep his career on right track

Frustrated Hill reaches the crossroads

Time is running out for Damon Hill. The former world champion set a two-year limit on his Formula One career yesterday and confronted the reality that he might not win another grand prix. The move to Jordan this year, which was supposed to put him back on the podium, has actually put his career in the wilderness.

Without a point in six races and predicting another struggle in the Canadian Grand Prix a week tomorrow, Hill faces a future of Formula One anonymity unless he acts quickly. He refuses to accept a role as an also-ran and has told Eddie Jordan he expects more from a team that lured him with a £4.5 million pay packet and a promise of a glorious end to his career.

Hill, on a two-year contract, has committed himself to Jordan this year, but there was the veiled threat that he may be forced to move if results do not change. "Some serious facing up to facts needs to be done by all of us," Hill, 37, said. "The time when you are not winning should be regarded as time lost and I don't want to continue in that way. Realistically, I have two years left and I want to get on with the job of winning and running at the front."

As Hill, testing his Jordan Mugen Honda at Silverstone, spoke, he weighed each sentence carefully, aware that a word out of place could cause a fracture in a team that is suffering its most traumatic season since it entered Formula One seven years ago.

The flamboyant Eddie Jordan is the sport's maverick entrepreneur, but he has been unable to break through to the front rank of Formula One. Hill, he believed, was the driver whose experience would be the final ingredient



Testing times: Hill's recent team switches have not produced the intended results and he may be forced to move on

needed to win Jordan's first grand prix. For Hill, Jordan's offer seemed to be a rescue from his unsuccessful move to Arrows last season and he basked in the warm welcome at the Jordan factory opposite the Silverstone circuit.

He speaks of his team with affection, but is clearly frustrated. The lack of performance from the Jordan and its

Mugen Honda engine had been a "surprise and a disappointment" and attempts to make improvements seemed to have made things worse.

Hill said: "It is about being clinically accurate with the work that is done and understanding the level of work and the standard that we are going to have to achieve. But it is a management job, part of

Eddie's job, to look at how the team can be injected with these higher standards and a better understanding, without upsetting the balance."

Hill had regarded the Monaco Grand Prix last Sunday as his "joker", when the Jordan would perform better on the narrow, slippery street circuit. Instead, the race was "a disaster", he said, qualify-

ing fifteenth on the grid and struggling home an undistinguished eighth, four places behind Mika Salo for Arrows, the team that he deserted. He fears that he will fare even worse in Montreal, a circuit that demands the power that his Jordan does not have.

Unless there is a transformation, Hill will end his Formula One career leaving the memory of a champion who lost his way, unable to sustain his talent, unlike so many before him, including Graham Hill, his father and a double world champion.

Yet he is one of Formula One's most successful drivers, with 21 victories achieved against the sort of adversity that would have broken many. In 1994, he had to revive the Williams team after the death of Ayrton Senna. He responded with dignity and six wins, narrowly losing the title to Michael Schumacher in a controversial last-race collision with the German.

When he won the championship in 1996, he had to drive knowing that he had been

I have two years left and want to get on with the job of winning

cruelly rejected by Frank Williams. His move to Arrows now seems hasty and ill-considered, though probably less damaging than his time so far at Jordan.

At least little was expected of him last year; this season, he thought that he would be racing to win. What hurts most is that Hill believes that he is at the pinnacle of his talent, yet is unable to find a car capable of carrying him to victory.

"I think I am driving better than at any time in my career," he said. "I regard it as a new challenge at Jordan, but I am no longer the sort of driver who can sit back and take what the team has to offer. Eddie wants me to be more involved and it is part of my role to be more demanding."

RUGBY UNION

Dawson strikes an upbeat note

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

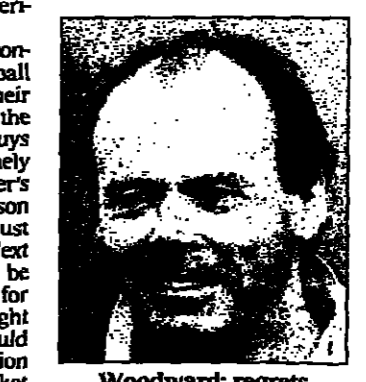
WITH all the bounce natural to his position of scrum half and his new status as captain, Matt Dawson accentuated the positive when England arrived in Brisbane yesterday to begin their tour of the southern hemisphere. "I think people are going to see some intense, physical and skilful performances," Dawson said.

"There are some very talented individuals in this squad. They have a golden opportunity to show that ability and we intend oozing the talent out of them." Predictably, England were greeted by a close examination of the reasons for the absence of so many experienced internationals.

"I wish players were contracted to the Rugby Football Union rather than their clubs," Clive Woodward, the coach, said. "There are guys back home who are genuinely worn out, given last summer's Lions tour then a long season of club rugby and injuries just got worse and worse. Next season, I will certainly be pushing behind the scenes for players to play the right number of games... I would like to think that this situation won't happen again." Ticket sales for the international against Australia at the Suncoast Stadium (capacity around 40,000) next Saturday are around 20,000.

"We will play in an unleashed manner and I believe we can cause Australia problems," Dawson said. "There is pace in the backs and strength and power up front. I believe we've got the players with the ability to produce that little something special that could make all the difference."

In Melbourne, Scotland will seek to put the demoralising



Woodward: regrets

Ireland have 14 internationals in their team against Boland today, the first game of their tour of South Africa, while Wales, who leave for southern Africa on Wednesday, will know today whether Allan Bateman can tour. The Richmond centre is due to have a nose operation on June 3, but the Welsh Rugby Union have asked their English counterparts to bring pressure on Richmond to uphold International Rugby Board regulations.

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

The England and Manchester United defender launches a new column exclusive to The Times

Nervous wait for players in catch-22

We are all supposed to be playing golf on our last two days out here in La Manga, but somehow I don't think it's going to be very relaxing...

There is no getting around it. I was one of the lucky ones two years ago and you do not know what to say or how to act with the lads who have been left out...

year apprentice. I remember watching the second-year apprentices going in to see the manager one by one to find out whether they were to be offered a contract...



GARY NEVILLE the players that others might say are rivals for my position, such as Martin Keown or Gareth Southgate. I don't look at it as a rivalry. When I play, I try to play well and I let the manager make the choices. Whatever I believe doesn't matter because all I do is play football.

ways, it would be great if the manager could have told us the squad last night, after the game against Belgium, and at least then you could go into the weekend knowing your position...

solid pros like Alan Shearer, David Seaman and Southgate, so the lads with outgoing personalities sometimes get stuck for it, but I'm a great believer that you need every type of character in a team...

Slack Scots eye chance of return to miserly best

WHATEVER may have been lacking in ornate rhetoric was more than made up for by idiomatic tang. "What we can't afford is to play miserably in this World Cup..."



Brown, the Scotland manager, hopes to orchestrate tighter defensive work in the fixture against the United States

and announced his retirement from international football. His partnership with Colin Calderwood, Colin Hendry and Tom Boyd, the three centre backs, may have a chance of recovering its old durability against a United States side that laboured over the scoring of its goals while dominating a dismal Kuwait side in a 2-0 win in Portland, Oregon last Sunday.

subject of sniggers when it announces its intention to win the World Cup by 2010. Such is the declared aim of the United States Soccer Federation...

all the genealogical investigations employed by Ireland while building their team, there is no cause for disdain over these methods.

clubs, but English supporters who remember Roy Wegerle with Queens Park Rangers, Coventry City and Blackburn Rovers may be surprised to find that, at 34, he still plays a significant part in Sampson's schemes.

Bergkamp still on the sidelines

DENNIS BERGKAMP is unlikely to be risked by Holland before their opening World Cup game against Belgium on June 13. The Arsenal forward is still recovering from the hamstring injury that kept him out of the FA Cup Final two weeks ago.



Holland struggled to a goalless draw against Cameroon in Arnhem on Wednesday, when Ronald de Boer, who moved up from midfield to partner Patrick Kluijvert as Bergkamp's replacement, missed his side's best chances to score. The Dutch will play Paraguay on Monday and Nigeria on Friday in their final World Cup warm-up matches.

to his recall to the Italy squad for the World Cup, may yet win a starting place for their opening game in France against Chile. The forward is expected to face Sweden on Tuesday in Italy's final warm-up game because of an injury to Alessandro del Piero.

Forest line up Anderlecht trial

NOTTINGHAM Forest could be ready for a rematch with Anderlecht - on the field as well as in the courts. Forest's preparations for their return to the FA Carling Premiership may include a meeting with the Belgian club in a tournament in Holland.

the hearing into an incident during one of their games last season. A disgruntled supporter ran on to the pitch during the 4-1 home defeat by Aston Villa in March.

tations from residents requesting that the application is called in for the Secretary of State's determination.

to meet the necessary criteria. The FA committee took into account the fact that the supporter concerned has since been banned from the stadium.

Blair anguish at sale of Ginola

KENNY DALGLISH, the Newcastle United manager, yesterday said the sale of David Ginola was out of his control, after the Prime Minister, a Newcastle supporter, criticised his decision to sell the French winger to Tottenham Hotspur.

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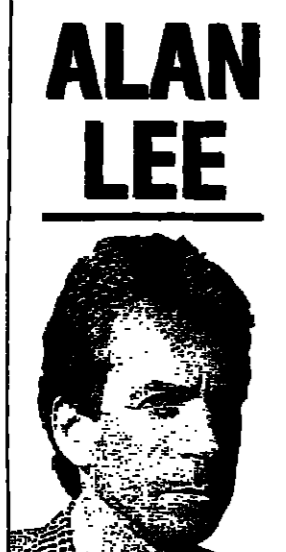
All-round attributes masked by Cronje's complexity

The dour image of South Africa's captain belies a man of education and manners

Modern South African cricketers are dour, so the received wisdom has it, and their captain is steely and implacable. Such pigeonholing, though, does no credit to Hansie Cronje, whose face, let alone the character beneath it, offers a moving screen of contradictions. Blink, and you miss the transformation from grim to grin and back again.

Australia had batted through seven hours for the draw that won them the series and Mark Waugh, whose century made it possible, was adjudged not out after dislodging a ball with his bat. Cronje, already simmering, evidently boiled over as he left the field. He is persistent now, though keen to put the episode into perspective. "To judge by some of the things that have been said or written, you might think I threw the stump javelin-style and it went clean through the door. In fact, it was a backhander which caused a chip in the panel.

"None of the umpires were in there and it honestly wasn't aimed at them, it was an expression of frustration at myself and at the team for not being able to bowl them out. But it was caused by temper, which is not on, and I regretted it immediately."



ALAN LEE

Cronje, 28, is educated, articulate and unflinchingly polite. On the morning we met, he was suffering from backache and the remains of a throat virus, yet he was punctual and co-operative. A devout Christian, demonstrably fit and health-conscious, he is in most ways the model ambassador for his game. But there is the matter of his temper to consider.

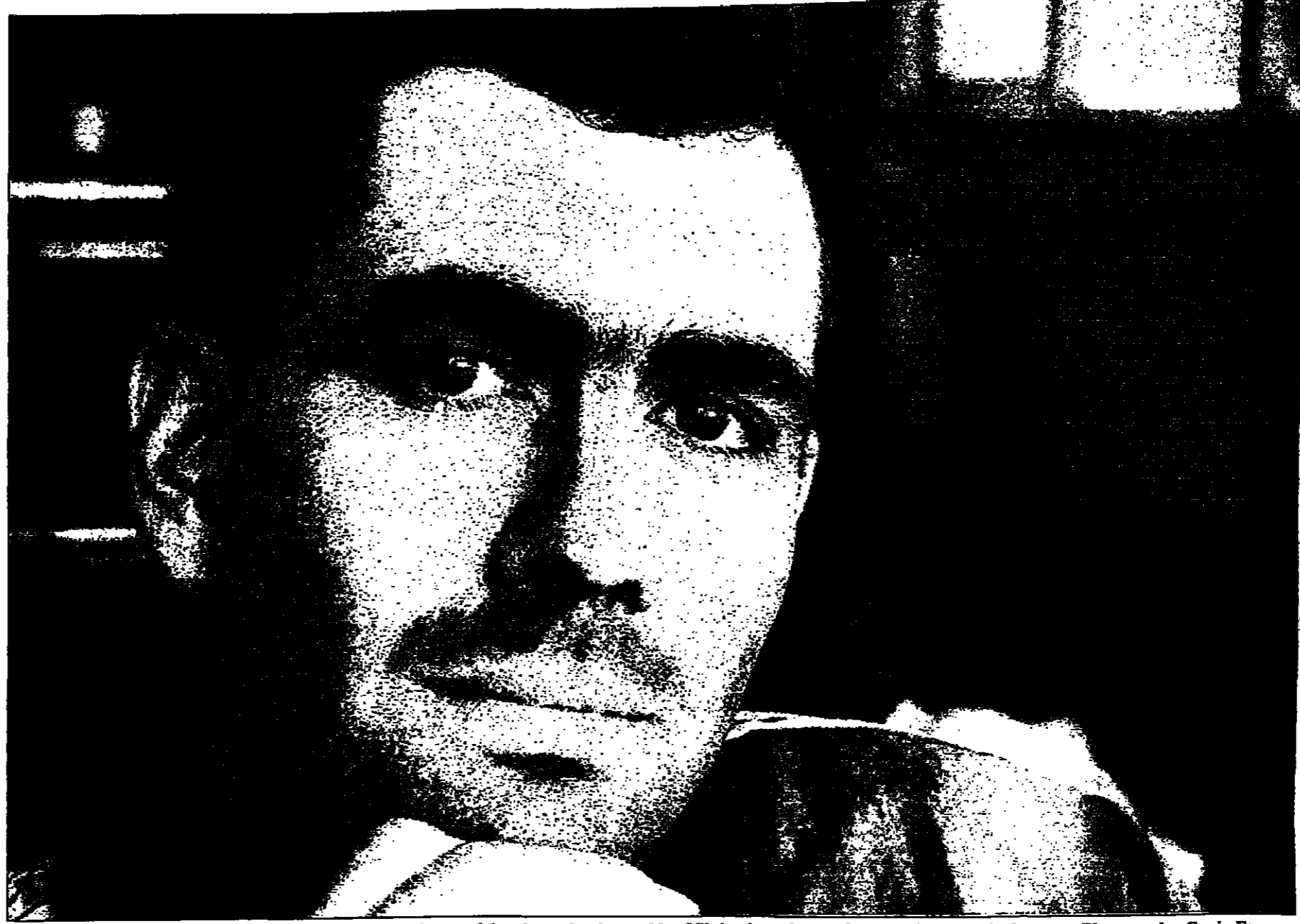
Watching him from afar, those thick eyebrows etching an impression of private intensity, it is easy to categorise Cronje, this Sampras lookalike, as one of sport's automatons, an emotionless iceman. The truth is different. "For sure, I have a temper," he said. "A bad one."

Public awareness of Cronje's darker side was alerted in February when he, rather than any of the more obvious hotheads in his team, admitted to damaging the door of the Adelaide umpires' room with a stump after a Test match that South Africa should have won but did not.

action followed but ball-tampering was cautiously alleged and commonly suspected.

Cronje regrets this incident, too, but denied any impropriety. "It was nothing more than an absent-minded action while play was held up," he explained. "It got blown out of all proportion and I was accused of discolouring the ball. I know now that it was a foolish thing to do but I have done it often before and it hasn't been taken out of context."

The problem with Cronje is one of blurred expectations. To know a little about him — his background,



Straight face: Cronje, a devout Christian and generally a model ambassador, is capable of flitting in an instant from good mood to bad temper. Photographs: Gavin Fogg

his religion, his obvious leadership qualities — is to expect an uncomplicated, upright man. To know rather more is to see a personality that is confusing, capricious and all the more intriguing.

Take his fickle attitude to food and alcohol. "I used to drink and eat a lot. Fast food and plenty of beer. Then I went through a health stage to get my weight down — I drank soda water and didn't eat much. But I decided I was withdrawing myself too much from the team, so now I have a glass of beer or two with the guys and try to eat the right food, but it doesn't always work."

Try his thoughts regarding women on tour. "I've worked out I will spend a maximum of 27 nights in my own home during the 12 months up to September this year. If you are going to be a married man in international cricket you have to bring your wife on tour. We have a relaxed attitude, so long as everyone realises the team comes first."

No problem so far, indeed a markedly more enlightened attitude than the South Africa tour party of 1965 that banned wives from being on the same continent as their players, or even the England side under Michael Atherton that barred partners two winters ago. Cronje, though, seems pious or judgmental when he reveals: "Girlfriends are also allowed but not in the same hotel. That may seem unfortunate but I think it's morally correct."

Cronje, however, insisted that he does not preach his religion. "I

won't walk around with a Bible under my arm. I read it every day and try and spend some quiet time alone, but I am not here to convert other people, just to be the best possible me."

"If I set an example. I am happy to do that but I am not perfect. I will say and do the wrong things sometimes. People might point to me and say you're a Christian, you can't do that, but I make mistakes, the odd swearword will come out. It's part of life."

He has his serious face on now and it remains in place as he talks of his upbringing, which was happy, and his belated awakening to the evil of apartheid, which was not. "I grew up in a system not knowing it was wrong. It was only when I came to England for the first time in 1988 and found that a lot of people were anti-South Africa that I realised something was not right, that we had to look beyond ourselves."

Cronje's home is in Free State, traditionally a conservative Afrikaner area, but his father, Ewie, who captained the province at cricket and later became the driving force behind Free State's sporting emergence, is far from reactionary. "He was brought up on a farm and his mates were young black kids. His first language was the tribal South Sotho and his sport, like mine much later, was normal and non-racial within an abnormal society."

Cronje went to the same school, Grey College in Bloemfontein, as his predecessor in the South Africa

captaincy, Kepler Wessels. He not only followed Wessels as the sporting icon of the school but emulated him in every way from diet through to training routines. When he led the Test team for the first time, aged only 24, there was the expectation of more of the same, but it has not been the case.

There was a fallout between the pair, when Wessels publicly criticised Cronje's team and tactics. "At the time I was sore and touchy, thinking he should have picked up the phone rather than put such things in the press. But he's a part of the media now and entitled to his views. We've spoken since and made up."

More significant, in the shift of South Africa towards more innovative cricket, has been the partnership between Cronje and the coach, Bob Woolmer. "We had lost 11 successive one-day games and something had to change. Bob was the right thing for us at the right time and in four years we have only differed once or twice on minor issues."

Cronje's attention is now on the Test series that starts at Edgbaston next Thursday, of his need to improve his own, poor batting record against England and of his driving ambition to win a series in England. "My wife, Bertha, says I am absent-minded," he said, "but I guess my mind is always on cricket. Even when we take a break, I am thinking of how we are going to play, what the team will look like, who I should be calling."

He used to ease his racing mind by running in the early mornings,

until a knee operation and heavier schedules forced a rethink. He listens to music, mainly mellow late Eighties, and reads. "I've read every John Grisham book but I also like sporting biographies, to take something from them, to go back to them for inspiration and guidance in handling teams."

By any standards, he is not doing a bad job. South Africa are the best one-day side around, and, in Test

cricket, one of the hardest to beat. They have a redoubtable spirit, encouraged by Cronje's insistence that even the youngest have their say. And are they still dour? "Maybe we are," the captain said, "only in that we stick to our disciplines. The guys don't mind the label. It's not that we go out to say 'stiff the public', it's just that we feel the important thing is winning."



Cronje puts bat to ball during practice, watched by Shaun Pollock

Maddy and Atherton to form new opening pair

Alan Lee, cricket correspondent, weighs up the options for the Edgbaston Test

THE first Test match selection of summer may not have the resonance of another national sporting squad that is due for imminent announcement, but its importance should not be underrated. It is more than a decade since England won a series against any of the leading Test nations and that record could rapidly be extended unless they get selection and strategy correct immediately against South Africa.

It has been said before, but the now traditional choice of Edgbaston for the first Test, followed by Lord's for the second, frequently works to England's disadvantage, especially when the opposition is equipped with new-ball bowlers of the quality of Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock. Against South Africa, England's best chance will come on pitches of even pace and bounce, where they should outbat them, and pitches that turn. They are unlikely to encounter anything so beneficial until the third Test at Old Trafford and the pessimistic view is that it might then be almost too late.

True, England have won their past two Tests at Edgbaston, but the first of these was against those woeful travellers from India and the second, magnificently ibusory though it was, against an underprepared and overconfident Australia.

Donald and Pollock will be looking forward to it, that much is certain, and England must bat uncommonly well to make the volume of runs needed to give their own bowlers a chance to compete. With the winter opening pair

disbanded, in deference to Alec Stewart's latest and most onerous responsibilities, the selectors will begin their debate at the top of the order.

There was never much doubt that Michael Atherton would retain his place, not even when he was struggling to make double-figures during the early weeks of the season. He represents class, continuity and has a pedigree against South Africa that commands respect. Now, as a welcome bonus, he has also struck form.

Identifying his partner is less straightforward. There are four candidates, of whom two are capped and left-handed. Mark Butcher won the last place on the Caribbean tour and let nobody down; he is in form and would be a justifiable pick — more so, perhaps, than Nick Knight, whose one-day record is superb, but whose technique is far less suited to Test cricket.



Knight: technical failings

The uncapped right-handers in the contest are Steve James, who made a double-century last week, and the meteor of the moment, Darren Maddy. Whether or not it was wise to include Maddy in the one-day series is now irrelevant: if he is good enough, as all three selectors believe he is, then he should play, daunting initiation though it may be.

Nasser Hussain ought to come in next and, despite rumours to the contrary, he says that he is happy to do so. His return to No 3 would allow Stewart a proper rest period after keeping wicket, when to go in first-wicket down is really no more relaxing than opening.

Stewart does still want to bat in the first four, which allows Graham Thorpe to



Maddy: deserves chance

continue in his established position at No 5, always assuming that he suffers no further back trouble. England are sorely weakened without him, but the contingency plan could involve Knight batting in the middle-order.

With Mark Ramprakash certain to start the series at No 6, the next position of issue is that of the bowling all-rounder. Robert Croft's improved batting suggests that he might move up to No 7 when England play two spin bowlers — reintroducing Ian Salisbury, it is to be hoped — later in the summer, but at Edgbaston a fourth seamer, capable of making runs, is likely to be of more use.

The long-term hope was that Ben Hollis would be in good enough form to occupy this role. Frankly, he is not, and his brother, Adam, could receive an early chance to put the disappointments of the winter behind him.

There are two other alternatives. One is Dominic Cork, at his best an obvious choice. He will not be overlooked lightly, but the selectors may want a shade more evidence than he has provided so far and the best, pragmatic solution, is to include Mark Ealham, the man most likely to make a half-century, take valuable wickets and do it all so unobtrusively that he is easily forgotten. Dean Headley is likely to join the automatic choices, Gough and Fraser, in the seam attack, as Andy Caddick has been returned to the backburner.

PROBABLE SQUAD: M A Atherton, D L Maddy, N Hussain, A J Stewart (captain), G P Thorpe, M R Ramprakash, M A Ealham, A J Hollis, R D B Croft, D Gough, A R C Fraser, D W Headley

Nuclear debate puts tour at risk

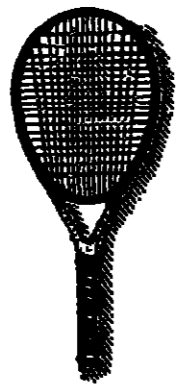
THE proposed Australia tour to Pakistan in September is under threat after the decision of the Australian Government to impose sanctions over the nuclear tests made by the Pakistan administration.

Australia are scheduled to play three Test matches and a one-day series in Pakistan from late September, followed by a mini-World Cup in Bangladesh. Malcolm Speed, the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) chief executive, said that it was too early to predict the fate of the tour.

"We don't go there for four months," he said, adding that the ACB would be monitoring the situation closely. "We will be talking to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in the next few days to get their opinion."

The DFA played a key role in Australia boycotting a World Cup game in Sri Lanka in 1996 after it informed the ACB that it would be unsafe for the team to travel to Colombo after a bomb blast. Kenya gained their second success over a Test-playing country in a one-day international late on Thursday night when they beat India by 69 runs in Calcutta. Maurice Odumbe hit five sixes in an innings of 83 as Kenya made 265 for five, to which India could make only 196 in reply.

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THE most intriguing... Middlese

This disclosure... Middlese

Gloucestershire... Middlese

Derbyshire... Middlese

Gloucestershire... Middlese

Derbyshire... Middlese

THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 30 1998

CRICKET: QUICK BOWLERS EXPLOIT HELPFUL CONDITIONS IN QUEEN'S PARK CENTENARY MATCH

Cork pushes claims for Test recall

CHESTERFIELD (first day of four, Leicestershire won toss): Derbyshire, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 175 runs behind Leicestershire

DERBYSHIRE were celebrating 100 years of playing on the delightful Queen's Park ground yesterday and the present team enjoyed it rather more than their forebears of 1898. Yorkshire closed the first day of that game on 533 for no wicket and a Derbyshire player, William Chatterton, is said to have called his family: "We are confidently expecting to take a wicket any day now."



Sutcliffe, Leicestershire's top scorer, turns to see an edged stroke elude the Derbyshire slip fielders at Chesterfield yesterday

There was cause for more genuine confidence among the bowlers yesterday and Leicestershire could never conquer the constraints imposed by high quality seam and swing exponents in helpful conditions. They lost their last five wickets for 17 runs and, with David Lloyd, the England coach, watching from the pavilion balcony, Dominic Cork gave an impressive audition for the forthcoming Test series.

That Cork finished the morning wicketless did him no justice, for the bat was beaten regularly. He took two wickets in a lively ten-over spell after lunch and then, either side of tea, picked up three more to complete figures of five for 72, his best in the championship since 1995. His line and rhythm were exemplary, his outswinger was in good order and the occasional ball was notably brisk. It is far too early to say whether captaincy is good for Cork; indeed, there were early signs that it was tempting him to do too much himself.

Portentously, Cork beat Wells twice in his opening over, but the opening pair mustered 34 before DeFreitas found a good one for Maddy, the ball swinging away to provide Aldred with the first of his three catches at third slip. Maddy retreated looking forlorn and will not have been cheered to hear that two of his rivals for a Test place were in the runs.

Dean, the left-armers, offered a new problem for Leicestershire. His third ball accounted for Wells and he defeated Iain Sutcliffe three times in an over. Sutcliffe, however, has a sound temperament to go with a resourceful technique and he was past 50 before lunch, working anything stray through the on side with acquisitive relish.

Cork was into his thirteenth over when he took his first wicket and, like his next two, it came from a leg before decision. Smith was caught only half-forward and after Sutcliffe had concluded his worthy 82 by walking for a catch behind, Cork removed Simmons and Nixon before tea.

Franks puts obstacle in the path of Durham

BY JACK BAILEY

TRENT BRIDGE (first day of four, Durham won toss): Durham, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are 144 runs behind Nottinghamshire

IT WAS all happening at Trent Bridge. Pneumatic drills sounded all day and, more enjoyably, there was a fine Topping Out ceremony for the new stand at the Radcliffe Road End. Steve Birks, the head groundsman, had also given the bowlers a chance to have their own fun on a grassy patch.

Without Paul Franks, the home team would have been in a fearful muddle. When he came in at 85 for five, nearly half their total was owed to extras. The good balls were being mixed with too many that were wayward and, in making his best first-class score, Franks was often fed his favourite ball — well up and on his legs.

Oxford give some bite to innings on a dog day

BY JOHN STERN

THE PARKS (first day of three, Oxford University won toss): Yorkshire, with nine first-wickets in hand, are 241 runs behind Oxford University

ONLY in the afternoon did the Oxford University batting really begin to resemble the bright and breezy weather. The cricket in the morning session and the period immediately after the interval was attritional, although Yorkshire's young troupe of seamers — Hoggard, Sidebottom and Hamilton — bowled tidily enough.

Overall, the Oxford batsmen acquitted themselves well and were able to declare on 260 for seven. Yorkshire lost the wicket of McGrath to Khan before the close. There were also three bizarre intrusions to keep people amused. A dog belonging to the correspondent of a rival newspaper scared the living daylight out of the Yorkshire slip cordon.

Middlesex regret visual reality

LORD'S (first day of four, Middlesex won toss): Glamorgan have scored 293 for five wickets against Middlesex

THE most intriguing news to come out of Lord's yesterday stemmed from an announcement that Middlesex had signed a sponsorship deal with a local optician that will save the club — according to Vinny Codrington, its chief executive — at least £5,000 in eye tests and glasses. Apparently, the county's players have been having their pre-season eyes tested for several years.

breaking an ankle. "I have hardly seen him when he has not been on a pair of crutches," Ian Gould, the club coach, said. Ian Blanchett, making his second championship appearance against Glamorgan, once injured himself in a collision with a sightscreen at Harrow. He has a cock-eyed view of life in the sense that 15 wicketless overs yesterday left him with a career record of one for 181, in which his sole victim is G A Hick.

Questions were also being asked about the visual trustworthiness of the Middlesex captain after Ramprakash chose to bowl yesterday on a pitch offering scant assistance. Ramprakash may claim that he was positioning himself for a fourth-innings run-chase.

His bowlers' optimism cannot have lasted much beyond the downfall of Shaw, the makeshift Glamorgan opener, to the eighth ball of the innings. To include Powell, who confirmed his promise with a cultured 43, the champions omitted Evans, James's natural opening partner, and Shaw's failure must have made his team-mates squint longingly in the direction of the England and Wales Cricket Board offices, in which the retired Hugh Morris now resides.

Hick century serves to frustrate

WORCESTER (first day of four, Worcestershire won toss): Worcestershire have scored 253 for nine wickets against Sussex

GRAEME HICK knows the despair of being stranded on 98. He has not forgotten how, three years ago, Michael Atherton declared in a Test match against Australia in Sydney when he stood two runs short of his hundred. Whether Hick would have taken confidence from an Ashes century to reproduce his county form at the highest level remains an issue in the hostilities of Worcestershire.

Two years have passed since Hick played a Test match and the momentum developing as he approaches the hundredth of his unfulfilled career might yet culminate in an England recall. At New Road yesterday, he moved from century No 98 to No 99 at the first opportunity after his 166 against Middlesex with such authority that the next one

will arrive either at Worcester or during a Test match. There was no irony in his words, but we know which is more likely. He bludgeoned 20 runs from his first deliveries alone and rarely missed a chance to dispatch anything loose. Khan, the leg-spinner, offended most regularly. In a spell of five balls, Hick pulled a full toss through mid-wicket and twice drove him through extra cover off the back foot as he progressed from 89 to 101.

When Sussex, second in the championship, found the right line. Weston and Solanki, the openers, offered catches to the cordon behind the wicket, and Haynes presented Adams with his second catch after adding 61 with Hick. Moody required 30 minutes to get off the mark, but settled and used his long reach to drive through the covers. It took a fine, one-handed diving catch by Adams to account for him two short of a half-century.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Vodafone Challenge Series, Gloucestershire v South Africans, Bristol, South Africans, Middlesex v Glamorgan.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Middlesex v Glamorgan, Nottinghamshire v Durham.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Worcestershire v Sussex, University match, Oxford University v Yorkshire.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes University match, Oxford University v Yorkshire, Worcestershire v Sussex.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Worcestershire v Sussex, Worcestershire v Sussex.

Surrey hopefuls suffer at the hands of Hooper

BY PAT GIBSON

THE OVAL (first day of four, Surrey won toss): Surrey have scored 314 for nine wickets against Kent

IN DAYS gone by, when England had rather more cricketers capable of playing at the highest level than they have now, Test trials were staged to try to sort out the wheat from the chaff. Not that the selectors ever learnt very much.

Another time, at Worcester, John Snow bowled leg breaks because he did not see the point of Geoff Boycott opening the second innings after he had made a century in the first. On another occasion, at Bristol, Derek Underwood wrapped up the match inside two days on a broken pitch.

It was much the same at The Oval yesterday, when we had the nearest thing we get to a Test trial these days. There are seven England players in the Surrey team and five more in the Kent side. At least eight of them have some chance of being picked for the first Test match against South Africa next Thursday.

However, only one of them looked the part on a pitch where Carl Hooper, a West Indies, returned figures of six for 83, the best of his career, and he happened to be Alec Stewart, who is sure of his Test places anyway.

Derbyshire county championship

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Derbyshire v Leicestershire, Derbyshire v Leicestershire.

Nottinghamshire v Durham

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Nottinghamshire v Durham, Nottinghamshire v Durham.

Worcestershire v Sussex

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Worcestershire v Sussex, Worcestershire v Sussex.

University match

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes University match, Oxford University v Yorkshire.

Worcestershire v Sussex

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Worcestershire v Sussex, Worcestershire v Sussex.

India v Kenya

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes India v Kenya, India v Kenya.

India v Kenya

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes India v Kenya, India v Kenya.

Surrey v Kent

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Surrey v Kent, Surrey v Kent.

Surrey v Kent

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Surrey v Kent, Surrey v Kent.

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Surrey v Kent

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score, Wickets, Overs. Includes Surrey v Kent, Surrey v Kent.

Fleming hundred puts the heat on Sri Lanka

A CENTURY from Stephen Fleming, the captain, gave New Zealand the upper hand in the first Test against Sri Lanka in Colombo yesterday.

Fleming, who scored 78 in the first innings, hit a six and 11 fours in an unbeaten 106 as New Zealand reached 260 for three in their second innings to lead by 280 with two days remaining. Craig McMillan was Fleming's partner in an unbroken partnership so far worth exactly 100. McMillan having scored 64 of the runs from 76 balls.

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Hick: 99th hundred



Hooper: six wickets

CRICKET: RHODES WEIGHS IN WITH JAUNTY HALF-CENTURY AS MEDIUM-PACERS ARE MADE TO SUFFER

Kirsten strikes timely run of form

BY IVO TENNANT

BRISTOL (first day of four: South Africans won toss): The South Africans have scored 337 for seven wickets against Gloucestershire

SUCH is the helter-skelter schedule of international cricket that this is the South Africans' last match before the first Test starts next week. It seems as if they have only just arrived in England, but no matter. The side that Hansie Cronje and Bob Woolmer put out yesterday did not exactly score runs all the way down the order, but there were sufficient contributions to keep them in good heart. Gary Kirsten made 125 and Jonty Rhodes batted with characteristic ebullience.

The South Africa side for the first Test is pretty much settled. McMillan and Rhodes, who made a half-century yesterday, are competing for a place in the middle order and Ntini, if he does something startling over the next few days, may play ahead of Klusener. As for Donald and Pollock, little, if anything, will be seen of them in matches other than the Tests for the remainder of the tour.



Kirsten pulls a ball from Lewis on his way to a century at Bristol yesterday. Photograph: Ben Radford / Allsport

Kirsten has not been in quite the same touch as Kallis, but he relished the line that the Gloucestershire medium-pacers maintained yesterday. Of the 19 fours in his century, more than half were punched

away through the cover ring. Only Smith, whose one Test appearance seems an age ago, provided a different angle to that of Lewis, Alleyne, Averis and Hancock.

There was nothing in the pitch on this first day for Ball's off spin. Alleyne did have an effective spell, in which he had Liebenberg caught at second slip, driving away from his body, and Kallis, who has achieved five half-centuries in

eight innings on this tour, caught at the wicket off an inside edge. Smith then yorked Cullinan, who got his feet in a tangle trying to keep out an inswinger.

This would have been the moment for him to contend with the middle order. He was excused, as was Russell, on the grounds that they have been playing cricket continuously this year.

Kirsten will not be given similar opportunities to utilise his off-drive at Edgbaston. Or, to be more accurate, he should not be. Kirsten batted until 50 minutes after tea, when, looking to late-cut Ball, he edged to slip. He faced, in all, 266 balls and struck 21 fours.

The most enjoyable period of the day, watched by the kind of crowd Gloucestershire seem unable to attract for championship matches, came when he was partnered by Rhodes. They added 96 through some effusive stroke-play.

When Rhodes was stumped by Williams, he had struck seven fours in a half-century off 62 balls. McMillan went cheaply, well held by Hancock at square leg, but he retains the keenness as well as the experience to offer a considerable amount to the South Africa selectors. Peter Pollock, the convenor, arrives in England next week and will have his say in who plays at Edgbaston.

GOLF

Magnificent McGinley takes charge

FROM MEL WEBB IN HAMBURG

IT WAS a perfect day for golf and there was perfect golf on the day. The best players in Europe took on the Gut Kaden course in the first round of the Deutsche Bank SAP Open yesterday, toyed with it and finally, almost to a man, sent it packing. It was not even a contest.

Anybody finishing above par on the opening day of an event that doubles as the Tournament Players' Championship of Europe was either in seriously dreadful form or affected by the heat and humidity that turned this part of northern Germany into a vast open-air sauna. This is Schleswig-Holstein, for goodness sake: it is not supposed to be hotter and stickier than Rangoon.

Red birdie figures lined the scoreboards round the course and nobody had more of them next to his name than Paul McGinley. The great and the good of European golf are appearing in this tournament and the ambitious Dubliner yearns to be one of them. The golf that he produced would have pleased the best.

McGinley had a 65, seven under par, a shot ahead of Peter Mitchell, the Portuguese Open champion, with a 14-man detachment that included Colin Montgomerie, Darren Clarke, Mark O'Meara, Bernhard Langer and Mark James on 67. When things get this tight, little things mean a lot and, on the day McGinley had the little things taped.

The stocky Dubliner summed up his round succinctly. "My driving was good, my iron-play was good, my chipping was good and my putting was good," he said. The only blemishes even this

most self-critical of golfers could find was that he missed a couple of greens on the inward half. He felt there was still room for improvement. Where, one wonders.

He had four birdies in succession from the 3rd, added more on the 6th and 8th and turned in 31, already five under par. He had only to take the most obvious of his opportunities on the remaining nine holes to bring home a challenging score, and this he did with birdies on the 13th and 17th.

McGinley wants to be a better player than he already is and is prepared to stake his time and money to help in his improvement. He has entered for the US Open and, unless something untoward happens in the next few days, will sacrifice two lucrative tournaments in England to play in the final qualifying competition in New Jersey on June 9.

The result of 36 holes of golf on that day will be a starting place at the Olympic Club in San Francisco the following week. Between 20 and 25 places are available out of 120 entries in the final qualifying. It is fervently to be hoped that McGinley's golf on that day is better than his maths was yesterday. He said he thought he had a one in ten chance of success; the abacus tells a different story.

Montgomerie was curiously dismissive after his round; it is a measure of his relentless quest for perfection that he could be so after a 67. He suggested it should have been much lower. "I left five putts short and bang in the middle of the hole," he said. The answer is simple — he will just have to hit it a bit harder.

OXFORD EIGHTS

Club	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th
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Ratcliffe through to final at Walton

BY PATRICIA DAVIES

ELAINE RATCLIFFE clawed her way into the final of the English women's Amateur Championship with a narrow victory over Karen Stupples, her Curtis Cup colleague, in the semi-finals at Walton Heath yesterday, while Lisa Walters, of Derbyshire, proved too strong for Sarah Heath, a willowy 16-year-old from Shropshire.

On a beautiful bright, breezy day, Ratcliffe, from Sandiway, defeated Kim Roston, the defending champion, from Clitheroe, who was not at her best — "I just wasn't there," she said — with relative ease. The match finished on the 15th, which, ironically, was where the game in the afternoon, against Stupples, started to turn Ratcliffe's way.

The Cheshire champion, who is also the holder of the Finnish title, was three down after ten and struggling to find her form. "My swing felt a bit wacky," she said, "as though it had no purpose to it and my putting wasn't good either." She hit her first really solid shot of the afternoon at the short 11th — a four-iron to the heart of the green, after Stupples had hit her tee shot long and left. The Kent woman then duffed her chip and lost the hole.

Ratcliffe continued the reeling-in with a birdie four to win the 13th, but when under this good work when she attempted to lose the 14th to a birdie and found herself two behind again. Stupples hit a nine-iron over the green at the 15th — "That was an awful shot," she conceded — and Ratcliffe drew level with a birdie four at the next, where she hit a majestic four-iron to the back of the green after Stupples had tangled with Walton Heath's penal-heather off the tee.

Ratcliffe took the lead for the first time with a par three at the 17th, where Stupples cleared the green and ended up in another tangle of rough, and they halved the 18th in bogey five, with Stupples three-putting after Ratcliffe had bunkered her second shot.

In the other semi-final, Walters, a positive 18-year-old from Derbyshire, who spent the winter in Portugal honing her game in order to prove herself this season, ran away from the gallant Heath with birdies at the 14th, 15th — the little punched nine-iron she hit to three feet there was a gem of control and confidence — and 16th to win all three holes and the match.

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FORTH COMPANY

Mees Pierson

Date	Company name
29 MAY	EPIC STORE
29 MAY	CAPITAL ASSET
29 MAY	FRANCE LIMITED
29 MAY	CEARTE
29 MAY	ERG INSURANCE SERVICES
29 MAY	SCORPION SPANCA
29 MAY	TRUCK DISTRIBUTION
29 MAY	ADAS
30 MAY	STANFORD INDUSTRIA
31 MAY	CONCRETE F. CO. S.A.
1 JUN	CITROEN UK
1 JUN	RESEARCH
2 JUN	ADAS
2 JUN	INTERFLEX
2 JUN	BP CHEMICALS
2 JUN	IBM
2 JUN	MAN TRUCK & BUS N. LTD
2 JUN	NATIONAL
3 JUN	SEVEN
3 JUN	FLOVINT JUNG LTD
3 JUN	HUNTERS
3 JUN	CONGLA
3 JUN	WACE & JONES
3 JUN	WEEPER
3 JUN	NORTHGATE MOTOR
3 JUN	HOLDINGS LTD
3 JUN	SCORPION SPANCA
3 JUN	SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN
4 JUN	AAA GLOBAL
4 JUN	QUAWOOD LIFT TRUCKS
4 JUN	HUGH JAMES
4 JUN	LAWRENCE GRAM
4 JUN	RENAISSANCE
4 JUN	SS
4 JUN	TAYLOR WOODSON
4 JUN	PROPERTY
4 JUN	THREADNEEDLE ASSET
4 JUN	MANAGEMENT
4 JUN	TOLLIT & H.F.
4 JUN	ABLE INSTRUMENTS & CONTROLS LTD
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4 JUN	ARTHUR ANDERSEN
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Four-letter word may hold the key for success of some leading golfers

Swinging lovers thrive on fairways

In golf, the four-letter word is king. The word is not chip nor putt, fade nor fore, draw nor sand. What is putting a pep into so many male golfers' putting is that old, old word, love.

Whether in the United States or in Europe, one professional after another is demonstrating the beneficial effects on their game of *amour propre*. It seems to be putting power into their drives, accuracy into their putting, steadiness into their trembling hands and steel into their nerves.

Just take the events over the past weekend. In the US, Tom Watson belied his age, 48, to win only his second tournament in nine years. Watson, who is divorcing Lynda, has rededicated himself to his golf since the troubles with his wife became public and, helped by the support of a new companion, has given up even the little he used to drink in favour of a spell on the wagon. The results speak for themselves. Watson appears to be putting better than he has done for years.

Meanwhile at Wentworth last weekend, Colin Montgomerie spoke of the beneficial effects of having a stable, caring family. "It helps if you have a settled family life," Montgomerie said. "It gives your morale a big boost to know you have a lot of support from the family."

So saying, Montgomerie went out to win the Volvo PGA Championship last Monday, the biggest prize in golf in Britain outside the Open. But to do so, he had to hold off the challenge of two young men from Scandinavia, both of whom are clearly in love and, not coincidentally, playing the best golf of their careers.

Patrik Sjoland is a 27-year-old Swede who won the recent Italian Open and finished seventh and second in his past two tournaments. Sjoland is at the top of his form and one

JOHN HOPKINS



reason is because he has his girlfriend, Ulrika Malm, caddying for him all the time.

"It is great to have her around because it is so hard to be away from one another for long spells," Sjoland said. "She helps me mentally. She helps me focus on shots and we also talk about other things in between shots. It makes me more relaxed."

Malm first caddied for Sjoland for five tournaments in 1996. It was not a success and Sjoland did not use her as a caddie in 1997. But this year all has been different. Now more relaxed with her walking alongside him in every one of the 11 events in which he has competed on the European tour, Sjoland finished second in Qatar in March and at Wentworth he set a target of 13 under par that Montgomerie only managed to beat by one stroke.

Thomas Bjorn was another who was snapping at Montgomerie's heels in the final round of the Volvo PGA Championship. The Dane played well on his debut in the Ryder Cup last autumn. Before the start of the biennial



The Swedish player, Patrik Sjoland, has found his fortunes on the European tour have improved dramatically since his girlfriend, Ulrika Malm, took over as his caddie

match against the United States Bjorn was noted for what he said. "This is where I want to be. There is no running home to Mummy now." Afterwards, Bjorn remembered for the way he played, fighting back in the singles from four down to halve with Justin Leonard, the Open champion and perhaps at the time the strongest player in the US team.

Good as that might have been, there was better to come when Bjorn decided to move to Dubai and set up home with Pernilla Waldenstram, a Swedish lawyer. "She is wonderful," Bjorn said. "She gives me a lot of confidence." The results prove it. The new prince of Denmark has won twice on the European tour already this year and has had a fourth and a third as well.

What these three men have found is nothing new, even if it is new to them. Since time immemorial women have helped men in their sporting quests, just as many men have uncomplainingly powered the sporting drives of women. Whether it is a man helping a woman or a woman helping a man does not appear to matter. The resulting uncomplaining support of one seems to act like an elixir on the other.

Jack Nicklaus seems to have benefited from it all his life though Barbara, his wife, has scarcely touched a golf club. Barbara Nicklaus has stood by her man as he became the greatest golfer of the 20th century, amassing 18 major professional titles.

One day in 1990, Nicklaus was being driven through a Scottish glen on a night as black as coal. "You know the best thing I ever did was to marry Barbara," he said quietly. "No question about it. I am sure I would not have achieved as much as I have if it had not been for Barbara."

As Barbara Nicklaus has

proved, it is not necessary to know anything about golf or to have played the game. Malm, 26, the daughter of a lorry driver, does not play golf and does not have sufficient technical knowledge to be able to assess Sjoland's swing or make suggestions if he is not quite striking the ball perfectly. What she does know is her man, how to get him up or help him restrain his emotions.

"She knows me better than anyone else," Sjoland said. "She can calm me down when necessary. It is good to have her around the whole time. We have had some good times together and I think there are better ones ahead."

Few women experienced more successful times with a professional golfer than Toots Cotton, wife of the late Sir Henry. The spirited daughter

of the opening hole of their first match did not remain on the fairway, rolling instead just in to the semi-rough. Toots was so incensed she marched up to the ball and instead of hitting it towards the green, smacked it firmly back towards the tee, from where Cotton had to play it again.

"I told you Henry. Keep it on the fairway or else," Toots said.

No modern golfer has come under the female spell as much as Nick Faldo, who was brought up by a determined mother who had deep ambitions for her only child.

"We wanted Nick to be an actor," she has recalled. "We thought he'd be another Oliver. We took him to dancing and elocution lessons. We tried to interest him in music. We knew he could win the Tchaikovsky prize. He has smashing legs and I wanted him to be a model so I used to take him to Harrods fashion shows. Finally we realised he was only interested in sport."

Three more women helped to mould Faldo into the most successful British golfer of modern times, the winner of six major championships. There was Gill, his second wife, to whom he was married while he won five of his major championships, and there remains Fanny Sunesson, the only female caddie among golf's top players, who has caddied for Faldo since early 1990 during which time he has won one Masters and two Opens.

Then late in 1995 Faldo left Gill for Brenna Cepelak, a 21-year-old student he had met in the United States. Once more Cupid drew back his arrow and, only a few months later, Faldo, clearly besotted by Cepelak, staged a remarkable comeback to overtake Greg Norman in the fourth round of the Masters and win his sixth major title.

‘We have had some good times together and I think there are better ones ahead’

of an Argentinian industrialist, she set high standards for him to meet. Once she sent him away from the dinner table three times to change before she was satisfied with his clothes. As a partnership they won the Calcut Foursomes on more than one occasion. In the years when Cotton was the reigning Open champion, Toots used to say she found he had ideas above his station. "Just keep me on the fairway and we will win as usual," Cotton used to say airily to his wife, who, in part thanks to his coaching, became good enough to win the Austrian Ladies Open. "You keep me on the fairway or else," Toots responded with a flash of her fiery temperament. One year Cotton's drive on



Malm lacks golf expertise but keeps Sjoland calm out on the course where so much is down to mental attitude

Passion for the game that knows no bounds

Men are the world's great romantics. Women, of necessity, are more clear-eyed and practical and, when it comes to love and romance and golf, Mary Queen of Scots set the tone. Shortly after her husband, Lord Darnley, was murdered — at her behest, admittedly — she was seen balking the ball around on the links at Leith. The subsequent tut-tutting became such a chorus of disapproval that it proved a fatal handicap, but over the years, it is difficult to uncover any woman whose golfing form, be it good, bad or indifferent, owed much at all to her emotional state.

Logically — although logic is not a quality traditionally attributed to women — it would seem that how you are feeling should affect everything you do, including swinging a golf club or holding a putt. Providing hard evidence that that is the case, is a difficult matter.

Reliable sources have come up with a player — no names, for reasons that will become clear — who was at her peak on the course only if she had made mad, passionate love the night before. No sex, no win was a rough guide to her championship record, which could be described as erratic.

Marie-Laure de Lorenzi, the Frenchwoman who has been one of Europe's leading players as an amateur and a professional for nearly two decades, maintained her form during the unpleasantness of a divorce a few years ago.

"It was a relief to be on the course," she admitted, but not everyone has the nous to see the course as a sanctuary at such a time, or the powers of concentration to give yardages their full attention.

Newly-wedded bliss may or may not make the game go with a swing. Certainly, it did not help Dottie Mochrie in the Curtis Cup at Prairie Dunes in 1986. Married for a couple of weeks, she dulled her opening drive and the United States team never recovered and were hammered by a Great Britain and Ireland side whose captain would not allow them to dive into the swimming pool — temperatures topped 100F — let alone into bed.

In these computerised, logistical, statistical times, it must surely be possible to quantify the effect of love on golf. The fiery Mochrie, now a successful professional, who has divorced and remarried, would be an ideal case study. It could be significant that she has reverted to her maiden name of Pepper.

PATRICIA DAVIES

FORTHCOMING COMPANY GOLF DAYS

The companies listed have registered their golf day for the 1998 Challenge. The top four individual scores on the day will form the company team eligible to qualify for a regional final.

TRIPLE SPONSOR
Mees Pierson

Date	Company name	Venue	Players
29 MAY	BRITISH STEEL	WHITBY	36
29 MAY	CAPITAL ASSET FINANCE LIMITED	PHILFORD HEATH	26
29 MAY	CLARKS INTERNATIONAL	ONE MANOR	30
29 MAY	ERIC INSURANCE SERVICES LTD	MERTHOPE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	128
29 MAY	MHC EXPRESS MAIL	CASTLE ROYLE	50
29 MAY	SCHROEDER / SKANDIA	BOWOOD	45
29 MAY	THE CHILDREN'S WARD	CAMBERLEY HEATH	88
29 MAY	APPEAL FRIMLEY PARK HOSPITAL NHS TRUST		
30 MAY	STANFORD INDUSTRIAL CONCRETE FLOORING LTD	HAWKSTONE PARK HOTEL	12
31 MAY	MULTITRUCK COMPONENTS LTD	WAVENDON	96
1 JUN	CITROËN UK	NOTTS	38
1 JUN	RICHARDSONS INTERIORS	ORMEAU	52
2 JUN	ADAS	SHIFNAL	90
2 JUN	AUTOLOGIC INFORMATION INTERNATIONAL LTD	MENTMORRE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	16
2 JUN	BP CHEMICALS	BLAIRGOWRIE	50
2 JUN	JBA (UK) LIMITED	FOREST OF ARDEN	40
2 JUN	MAN TRUCK & BUS UK LTD	MERE G & CC	40
2 JUN	NATIONAL INVESTIGATION SERVICE HM CUSTOMS & EXCISE	HATFIELD LONDON COUNTRY CLUB	40
3 JUN	FLEXOVIT (UK) LTD	THE TYTHERRINGTON CLUB	20
3 JUN	HUNTERS KIL HOWARD CONSULTING LTD	STONE PAGES	20
3 JUN	IMAGE & JONES	HESWALL	48
3 JUN	MEESPIERSON NV	MENTMORRE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	60
3 JUN	NORTHGATE MOTOR HOLDINGS LTD	CASTLE ROYLE	48
3 JUN	SCHROEDER / SKANDIA	MOORTOWN	90
3 JUN	SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN	WORPLESDON	38
4 JUN	AXA GLOBAL RISKS (UK) LTD	CUDDINGTON	64
4 JUN	DAEWOO LIFT TRUCKS / LIFT TRUCK DISTRIBUTION	BUCKINGHAM	35
4 JUN	HUGH JAMES SOLICITORS	WHITCHURCH (CARDIFF)	60
4 JUN	LAWRENCE GRAHAM	RAC COUNTRY CLUB	68
4 JUN	RENAUCRES HALL HOSPITAL	FORBY	24
4 JUN	SG	ST GEORGES HILL	80
4 JUN	TAYLOR WOODROW PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LTD	BIRCHWOOD PARK	16
4 JUN	THREADNEEDLE ASSET MANAGEMENT	EAST BERKSHIRE	35
4 JUN	TOLLIT & HARVEY LTD	WOODHALL SPA	25
5 JUN	ABLE INSTRUMENTS & CONTROL LTD	LETHAM GRANGE	44
5 JUN	AKZO NOBEL CHEMICALS	NORTHAMPTON	100
5 JUN	ARTHUR ANDERSEN	WALTON HEATH	50
5 JUN	CHEMETALL LTD	WALSALL	46
5 JUN	KPMG	MANNINGS HEATH	48
5 JUN	NATIONAL STARCH & CHEMICAL LTD	THE WARWICKSHIRE	120
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Toots Cotton, took a firm line with her husband, Henry; Tom Watson and his soon to be ex-wife, Lynda, celebrate winning the 1975 Open



THE TIMES WORLD CUP FANTASY LEAGUE

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As the best players in the world gather in France for what promises to be one of the most exciting World Cup tournaments ever staged...

HOW TO PLAY Select a team of 11 players from the list below. You can enter anytime, by post or phone, until June 10. You can

only choose one player from any national team and you must select a 4-4-2 formation (a goalkeeper, four defenders, four midfielders and two strikers).

THE SCORING SYSTEM Players will score points as follows: Goal 3 points, Assists 2 points, Defender/Goalkeeper Appearance 1 point for a defender or goalkeeper playing 45 minutes or more of a match, including extra time...

Assists points awarded to a team-mate making the last pass before a goal is scored. Only applicable to members of the scoring team. If the last touch before a goal scorer is from a team-mate but his touch does not significantly alter the speed or direction of the ball...

Appearance points awarded to a defender or goalkeeper who is on the pitch for at least 45 minutes including extra time. Defenders or goalkeepers appearing in only part of a game will lose points for goals conceded while playing. If no goals are conceded while they are playing, they will be awarded a clean-sheet, if they are on the field for 75 minutes or more including extra-time.

Outs: extra time (golden goal) goal and assists are awarded as above. For extra time goals points are deducted against the goalkeeper and defenders as above. No points are awarded for penalty shoot-out goals. Full details of how to check your team score will appear in The Times from the beginning of June.



0891 66 55 88 (outside UK +44 990 100 385) Helpline: 01582 702 720, weekdays 9am to 6pm.

GOALKEEPERS

Table with columns: Code, Player, Country, Caps, Goals. Lists goalkeepers from Argentina to Yugoslavia.

MIDFIELDERS

Table with columns: Code, Player, Country, Caps, Goals. Lists midfielders from England to Yugoslavia.

DEFENDERS

Table with columns: Code, Player, Country, Caps, Goals. Lists defenders from Croatia to Belgium.

STRIKERS

Table with columns: Code, Player, Country, Caps, Goals. Lists strikers from Belgium to Belgium.

This list will not be finalised until just before the World Cup begins, as many of the squads of 22 have not yet been announced. But remember that you are allowed unlimited changes to your team before June 10.



All information provided by Fantasy League Limited © Fantasy League Limited

THE TIMES SATURDAY... pri... WO... FOO... Head the exclusive interview... www.the-times.co.uk

THE TIMES WORLD CUP FANTASY LEAGUE

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Select your team and make a note of the three-digit player codes for your 11 players. Call the number below, and when prompted, tap in the player codes. You will be asked to give the name of your team (no more than 16 characters). You will then be given a ten-digit personal identification number (PIN) - make sure you write this down and keep it safe. You will need it to check your team's progress and make any transfers. The call will last approximately seven minutes. 0891 calls cost 50p per minute. Calls from payphones cost approximately double. Calls from outside the UK (+44 990) are charged at national rate.
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Surname
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Postcode
Daytime Tel
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Cheque/PO No.
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Defender
Defender
Defender
Defender
Midfielder
Midfielder
Midfielder
Midfielder
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Kinane rides Saratoga Springs again in the French Derby

BIG-RACE FIELD BBC2

GOING: GOOD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE

Table of race results for the Big-Race Field, including race numbers, names, and times.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Table of results from previous days, including sections for Ayr, Wolverhampton, Catterick, and Lingfield Park.

SPORT 45

RACING: PRIX LUPIN WINNER CAN HOLD RAIDERS AT BAY

Croco Rouge to triumph in Chantilly showpiece

By CHRIS McGRATH

PERHAPS someone will sit Christy Roche down in front of a television tomorrow, stick a drink in his hand, and urge him to follow a tutorial in how to ride a fancied colt in a classic for Aidan O'Brien.

It is not as though he should need telling, at his time of life. But there can be no doubt that Michael Kinane will ride Saratoga Springs in rather more positive fashion in the Prix du Jockey-Club (French Derby) at Chantilly tomorrow than did Roche his stablemate, Second Empire, in the Irish 2,000 Guineas last weekend.

Roche believes that his tender handling of the favourite represented a duty to his mount's well-being. Punters, however, will undoubtedly feel more comfortable with Kinane's trademark vigour tomorrow — though whether it yields them more profit is another matter.

Saratoga Springs is one of those racehorses, described as lazy, who actually labours harder than rivals to whom racing comes easily. This devotion to the work ethic, in fact, could even see Saratoga Springs turned out for the Vodafone Derby itself next Saturday should his performance tomorrow merit it.

Kinane, who rides the Ballydoyle horses overseas, got his mount to dig deep in the Danté Stakes at York on his reappearance — outpaced as the tempo quickened, but enjoying a clear run on the outside to beat City Honours half a length.

One theory is that the extra distance tomorrow will allow him to hold a position, but there is a chance that Saratoga Springs (who is not guaran-

Pritchard favoured in thrilling title race

POINT-TO-POINT BY CARL EVANS

SOME CAUL FIGURES will be entering the changing tent at today's Exmoor meeting. With one week of the season remaining, all three contenders for the men's championship will be riding at the Devon fixture, each knowing their pursuit of the title, involving months of hard work and dieting, could rest on this afternoon's events.

Julian Pritchard, the reigning champion, will smile a lot and be jaunty. Tim Mitchell will look tense and Andrew Dalton inscrutable.

Pritchard is the man in form. He said a week ago: "I'm going to win this title," and promptly rode two winners. Dante's Pride, Full Score and Getaway Blake all have chances today for him, the last-named in the fourth race, in which Mitchell, expected to gain the upper hand on Apatuna King.

Mitchell said of his title chances: "I'm more optimistic — I've got some good chances at the Exmoor. John Dufosse has put me up on Blustery Day in the maiden and Stillmore Business or Moving Earth are possible in the intermediate."

Dalton, with 31 wins, is level with Pritchard and one ahead of Mitchell. Yesterday, he was hoping Tim Forster would run Relaxation at the meeting, but his best chance of victory is on Shoon Wind at tomorrow's Harborough Hunt Club fixture.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: Exmoor at the Devon Downs, 10.15 am. Exmoor (first time 200), Gallopers, Foxhunting, Am W of Cashel (2.30), TOMORROW: Harborough Hunt Club, 10.15 am. Harborough, 10.15 am. Harborough, 10.15 am.

7.50 RING & BRYMER ACHILLES STAKES

Table of race results for Ring & Brymer Achilles Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

8.20 LORNE STEWART MAIDEN

Table of race results for Lorne Stewart Maiden, including race number, names, and times.

8.50 BLACKBIRD HANDICAP

Table of race results for Blackbird Handicap, including race number, names, and times.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table of course specialists, including names and statistics.

KEMPTON PARK

THUNDERER 6.20 First Consul, 6.50 Vola Via, 7.20 One Singer, 7.50 Midnight Escape, 8.20 Shalama, 8.50 Talulah Belle.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) DRAW: SF, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

6.20 FUSION NIGHTS AT THE JUBILEE CLUB MAIDEN STAKES (3-Y-O, £3,729 7h) (17 runners)

Table of race results for Fusion Nights at the Jubilee Club Maiden Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

6.50 FLORENCE NAGLE HANDICAP (Apprentices £3,159 1m 11) (12)

Table of race results for Florence Nagle Handicap, including race number, names, and times.

7.20 AMBITION HANDICAP (3-Y-O, £3,696 7h) (17)

Table of race results for Ambition Handicap, including race number, names, and times.

MUSSELBURGH

THUNDERER 6.40 Abhisinia, 7.10 Little Miss Rooker, 7.40 Soaked, 8.10 Northern Motto, 8.40 Mukamb, 9.10 Wagga Moon.

GOING: GOOD DRAW: SF, LOW NUMBERS BEST

6.40 JAMBOS SELLING STAKES (2-Y-O, £2,220 5f) (9 runners)

Table of race results for Jambos Selling Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

7.10 SHERATON GRAND TERRACE RESTAURANT CLAIMING STAKES (£2,182 1m 4f) (7)

Table of race results for Sheraton Grand Terrace Restaurant Claiming Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

7.40 SHERATON GRAND CUP HANDICAP (£4,224 5f) (9)

Table of race results for Sheraton Grand Cup Handicap, including race number, names, and times.

7.50 CLARK CONSTRUCTION SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,716 2m 11f 110yd) (12 runners)

Table of race results for Clark Construction Selling Handicap Hurdle, including race number, names, and times.

7.50 RING & BRYMER ACHILLES STAKES

Table of race results for Ring & Brymer Achilles Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

8.20 LORNE STEWART MAIDEN

Table of race results for Lorne Stewart Maiden, including race number, names, and times.

8.50 BLACKBIRD HANDICAP

Table of race results for Blackbird Handicap, including race number, names, and times.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table of course specialists, including names and statistics.

Blinkered first time

CATTERICK: 2.00 Granny Hill, KEMPTON PARK: 8.50 Mistic Ridge, LINGFIELD PARK: 2.45 Sea Waves, 3.15 Kim's Brave, 3.50 Super Snip, 4.25 Tamark, 4.55 Riff, 5.25 Carillon, 5.55 Ruff, 6.20 Shalama, 6.50 Vola Via, 7.20 One Singer, 7.50 Midnight Escape, 8.20 Shalama, 8.50 Talulah Belle.

8.10 SHERATON GRAND TERRACE RESTAURANT CLAIMING STAKES

Table of race results for Sheraton Grand Terrace Restaurant Claiming Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

8.40 ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND RACING RELATED MAIDEN STAKES

Table of race results for Royal Bank of Scotland Racing Related Maiden Stakes, including race number, names, and times.

9.10 HEARTS ARE CHAMPIONS HANDICAP

Table of race results for Hearts are Champions Handicap, including race number, names, and times.

8.00 LINCOLNSHIRE ECHO HANDICAP HURDLE

Table of race results for Lincolnshire Echo Handicap Hurdle, including race number, names, and times.

8.30 GEDSTAR HUNTERS CHASE

Amateur, £2,052: 2m 6f 110yd (14)

Vertical text on the far right edge of the page, likely a continuation of the main article or other news.

Horse sense and hospitality provide password to fast friendships at National Hunt stable

Knight errand provides feed for thought

Oh God, they thought when I arrived. They were too nice to say it, but you could see it in their eyes. I was the last straw. A pair of owners had shown up an hour early to look at a horse they might buy a leg of. Another owner had made a late decision to run a horse at Uttoxeter, and why the hell weren't there more hours in the bloody day?

SIMON BARNES Talking horse



latest bill, or the latest humiliation. Bloody horses, and I say it for the same reason. And the password holds good for — well, I think it has held good for every yard I have ever visited. So far, anyway. Regardless of what horsey discipline the yard pursues.

But then the Knight yard is famous for its wide and eclectic approach to horsemanship or to use a better word, horsemastership. This is still an inadequate word, but we really can't allow horsemistresship. Like the word "lad", in the horsey — in the racing — world, many masculine nouns have now been expanded to include the feminine gender. To the benefit of the horse.

One of the odd things about the horsey world is its fragmentation. It is full of hermetic compartments. Flat racing is soulless, jump racing is cruel, endurance riders are chickens and dressage riders are all queens of either sex. Crossing the boundaries — well it's just not done.

Or not often, though increasingly, Knight has done — well, everything, really. From the same farm, she has ridden pony club shows and Badminton, finishing twelfth one year, which takes a very great deal of doing.



Knight at her stables in West Lockinge Farm. The yard is famous for its eclectic approach to horsemanship. Photographs: Clive Postlethwaite

Pressing business, since good owners are as important as good horses. If you can't do right by both, you can't train. Priorities are priorities, and some bloody journo turning up on the doorstep was not going to make their day. *Au contraire.*

Apparently every ansaphone and contact number I possess was humming with messages telling me to stay at home, but I, travelling serenely in the no-mobile-phone-no-Walkman carriage, was blissfully unaware. It was not a good way to arrive.

If Henrietta Knight, National Hunt trainer, could have pressed a button that would have made me disappear without disconcert, she'd have damn near broken her finger on it.

And yet in about 3½ minutes. Hen and I were in the feed room, she dishing out a kind of scrupulously-measured and individually-catered Chinese banquet for each of the 28 horses living in — there are generally around 60 when the season is in full swing — and chatting away like old friends. And for me, a very nasty day was suddenly a very nice one indeed.

Partly this was because of the basic hospitality — of Knight, of West Lockinge Farm, of that side of National Hunt racing that is still the game of love.

And partly it was because I know the password. Friend to this ground and liegeman to

the horse. It wasn't really anything that I said. I just love being in a yard, whether it's prime function is dressage or endurance or racing or the pony club mounted games.

"The password is probably 'love', but like most forms of that problematic and vexatious noun, it is the love that dare not speak its name. I can never think of interview questions: what is the most important thing in your life?, and so on. So we talked about feed. I was given a pocket full of oats to taste. I am nibbling them now, as I write. I'll be jumping out of my skin tomorrow.

And partly it is something to do with the place. West Lockinge Farm has been there for centuries and so have Knight's family, and the place is heaving with horses and memories and bantams. Bantams, Knight told me, are a bloody nuisance. Country people, like the bi-coloured python rock snake, always talk like this. It means, basically, I couldn't live without them.

Bloody horses, I say, and I say it often. Generally at the

back, 41 winners so far this dying season, a frustrating one by her standards.

Most athletic disciplines these days stress the value of cross-training. Cricketers play football, runners go cycling, and I even know a darts player who swears by his regimen of long distance swimming.

Knight has always been in the vanguard of cross-training for horses. Every horse who's

schooling. The horses learn balance and develop greater athleticism.

They develop the muscles in the back and hind quarters, which makes them jump better and cleaner, and helps them get away from a fence faster. The horse that leads, jumps the fastest, tends to win jump races.

She is married to Terry Biddlecombe, the former jump

People who have known life's ghastliness tend — if they are saved — to be good at life's good things. What is the opposite of lost souls? Found souls, perhaps.

And West Lockinge Farm is a fine place in which to be found. Behind the hassle of the day lies the peace of ages; behind the trivialities and nonsense of the latest deadline — whether it's theirs or mine — hides the purpose of centuries.

People and animals. People and horses. People and the green bits of earth, acres in which individual horses can be trained individually, each according to its need.

Black ducks on the pond, a present from Willie Carson. White ducks enthusiastically interbreeding with them. Conker trees groaning under the weight of their candle-sticks. And horses, and horse people. Balm to the soul. But must get that bloody horse to Uttoxeter. "Sorry we've got to go. So sorry you couldn't stay for longer." It made my day, that last bit, it really did.



Working partnership: Knight and her husband, Terry Biddlecombe, the former national hunt jockey

'From the same farm, she has ridden pony club shows and Badminton, once finishing twelfth'

She spent eight years on the senior horse trials selection committee, four as chairman in the run-up to the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. She then trained point-to-pointers, specialised in "bringing on" — lovely bit of horsey jargon, that — young horses, and also in reschooling various rogues, known as "remedial horses". She took out a full licence as a National Hunt trainer 11 years

gone through her hands, from the rogues of her youth to the potential champions of today, go through basic schooling. Schooled, as most non-racing people would say, "properly". Schooled to "work in an outline", which means face — horses, not riders — at right angles to the floor, hocks tucked athletically beneath the back end, Katy Meacham, the event rider, does a lot of this

jockey, and it is a touching relationship. "Couldn't have done it — couldn't have done anything — without this thing." A partnership, don't call him her assistant.

Both are touchingly eager to mention, in a careful-casual way, that they have had problems with the drink. Well, that's racing, bad results drive you to drink and so do good ones. But that's long past.

RUGBY LEAGUE: LONDON WANT FULL BACK AS McRAE TAKES GAMBLE

Umaga the man to fill void for Broncos

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

LONDON Broncos are close to completing a deal with Mike Umaga, the dual code Western Samoa and former Halifax Blue Sox full back, who spent the last rugby union season playing for Rotherham.

The need for reinforcement was highlighted by the absence of five leading Broncos players from the JJB Super League game away to Bradford Bulls last night, although injuries to Mark Carroll and Martin Offiah, who could return for the home game against Sheffield Eagles next Saturday, are not as bad as first feared.

Halifax are the surprise package of the Super League, just as Sheffield were in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. They have upset Bradford and St Helens in successive weeks and retain the same squad to face Sheffield today at Don Valley Stadium, where the Eagles felt that an inaccurate refereeing decision cost them victory over Leeds last week.

Sheffield, anxious to atone for throwing away a 19-point lead against the Super League leaders, face the season without Matt Crowther, who has damaged medial knee ligaments. Michael Jackson replaces Paul Carr in the pack and should Rod Doyle fail a fitness test, Martin Wood will take over at loose forward.

After his £1,000 fine and touchline ban for verbally abusing referees, Andy Gregory, the Salford Reds coach, must sit in the stands at The Willows as he must that his blood pressure is up to the visit tomorrow of Castleford Tigers, who have also lost their past two matches.

In response to four successive defeats, Warrington Wolves have won their past three games and travel to bottom-placed Huddersfield Giants, but with doubts about Mark Forster and Brendon Turta, who both suffered leg injuries in the last-minute defeat of Hull on Monday.

St Helens seek inspiration

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

A ROCKY season for St Helens will look even worse unless they can stop the run-away charge of Leeds Rhinos in the JJB Super League at Knowsley Road tomorrow evening and, much as they might dislike the idea, do Wigan Warriors a favour at the same time.

The omission of Bobbie Goulding might not seem to be a gamble should St Helens end Leeds's seven-match unbeaten run, which would enable Wigan to go top on points difference, provided that they dispose of Hull Sharks.

Goulding's lethargy this season would appear to be symptomatic of the club as a whole. Since winning the inaugural Super League title in 1996 and the Challenge Cup in 1996 and 1997, St Helens have been preoccupied by back-room tensions.

Cuts in bonuses to help meet the salary cap requirement led to the threat of a players' strike. The imminent return of Eric Hughes as director of rugby, 2½ years after he was sacked as coach, was pushed through without reference to Shaun McRae, Hughes's replacement, and David Howes, the chief executive, and has led to speculation about the futures of both men.

After the defeat away to Halifax last week, McRae dropped Goulding for the first time since the Great Britain scrum half joined from Widnes in 1994. The young and ambitious Sean Long will partner Tommy Martyn, who will start his first game at stand-off since he suffered an ankle injury in the defeat by Wigan seven weeks ago.

Significantly, Leeds, who have won only three times in the past 14 years at Knowsley

Road, are without the suspended Adrian Morley, their outstanding forward, but have Marc Glanville back after concussion. St Helens have also omitted the transfer-listed Karlie Hammond. Apollo Perellini makes his first start in the pack, while Andy Haigh replaces the injured Damien Smith at centre.

Having scraped home at Sheffield and against London, Graham Murray, the Leeds coach, thinks that St Helens, in adversity, could pose even more of a threat without Goulding. "In Long, they've a talented player who has the ability to change a game. His pace off the mark is another thing we'll have to guard against," he said.

"I believe we can maintain our 100 per cent record. To come back from 13-4 down against Sheffield tells me that we've a lot of good qualities. I know there will be some rewards for us by the end of the year."

Wigan will pose an immense test of Hull's powers of recovery since they succumbed to Warrington last Monday in the fifth minute of added time. Andy Jarrell has not trained because of a dead leg, but is expected to be fit to lead Wigan.



Goulding: dropped

GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

Table with columns for Today, Tomorrow, and other sports fixtures including Cricket, Football, Rugby League, and Tennis.

Large advertisement for Saturday rest, featuring 'SATURDAY. ANYTHING BUT A DAY OF REST.' and 'SPORT Vision WEEKEND metro the times magazine meg@ THE TIMES'.

Vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, including 'THE TIMES SATURDAY', 'Summertime, and En ro than', and 'Com bit c'.

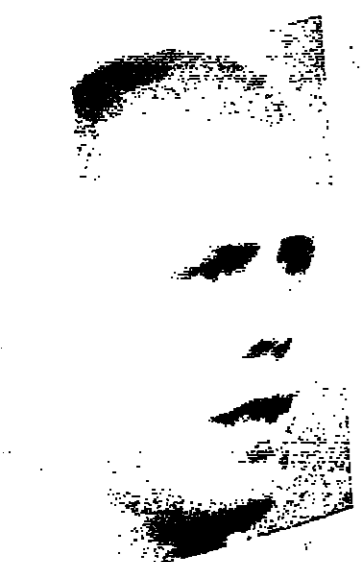
Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom center: 'هكذا من الأصا.'

THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 30 1998

Hunt stable



seek inspirati



SO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES



For your company golf day



it's the business

4 steps to La Manga.....

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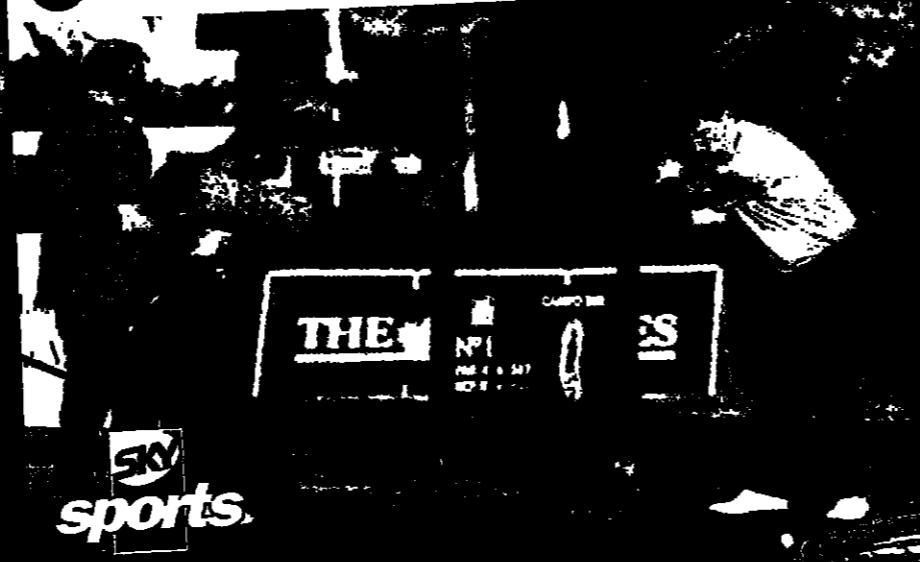
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Main table containing unit trust prices, organized by fund name, with columns for fund name, price, and other financial metrics.

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THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 30 1998
Lizanne Rose
you find a foreign...
M...
Before a personal...
BANKS
With you might...



OUT IN THE COLD 63

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WEEKEND MONEY

COVER-UP 58

Will the OEIC umbrella funds help or harm?



The £40bn sleeping beauties

Lizanne Rose explains what to do if you find a forgotten savings account

More than a year after Alliance & Leicester converted from a building society to a bank, 70,000 of its members have yet to claim their windfall shares, now worth more than £2,000 per member.

Many of those whom A&L tried to trace in the months preceding conversion were holders of dormant accounts who had not responded to correspondence, most frequently because they had changed address. NatWest Bank, whose computerised records date to the 1970s, holds millions of pounds in up to 400,000 dormant accounts.

It is impossible to calculate how much money is unclaimed in these sleeping accounts around the country but it is estimated that the figure may be as high as £40 billion. Although records date back to the last century, the numerous mergers and name changes over the years have reduced 1,300 building societies which existed in the past to just 71 today.

Tracing all dormant accounts would be a lengthy and complex task as many account details are held at branch level, not on a central bank or building society computer.

Here Weekend Money looks at the steps to take if you find an old building society passbook or if you have lost contact with your bank.

BANKS

Before a personal savings or current account is classed as "dormant", all banks will make attempts to trace the account holder. If there have been no withdrawals or deposits other than interest and charges for a set period, and the bank has not heard from you during that time, your branch will write to you at the last address held to ask if you want to keep the account open. This set period will vary but it is usually at least a year. (Some banks will contact you only if the sum in your account is above a certain amount, for example £25.) If you respond by saying you wish to keep your account open, your bank will continue to treat it as "live", sending you statements as

usual. If, after a set time (usually between six and 12 weeks) the bank does not hear from you, your account will be considered "dormant". Banks treat dormant accounts differently from live ones for reasons of security. The British Bankers Association (BBA) says that by doing this, it can stop fraud — and prevent statements and cheques being sent to an out-of-date address where someone other than the account holder could try to access the account.

SOCIETIES

Most building societies follow a similar procedure although as you are not normally sent monthly statements, there is less correspondence by post and therefore a lower security risk. The majority of societies will continue to consider an account "live", with interest continually added indefinitely.

Some building societies will have a major sweep of their accounts every few years — Bradford & Bingley did so in 1995. The society contacted all members who either had a very low balance (less than £50), had not made any transactions for a long time, or those who were in a low interest account and could be receiving a better rate, asking if they wished to keep the account open.

Bradford & Bingley returned a lot of money to customers, many of whom had forgotten they had savings with the building society. Those customers who did not reply had their accounts frozen, filed as dormant, and the money put into central funds. Other building societies will consider an account dormant when they receive a letter returned by the Royal Mail saying the customer is not known at that address. Once an account becomes dormant it will remain in the customer's name but no longer earn interest.

If the customer subsequently resumes contact with his or her building society, interest will be calculated and added to the account immediately.



SHEILA ROCK

NEXT STEPS

All banks and building societies will make a concerted effort to contact their customers. However, if the lines of communication have broken down it is then up to you to contact the bank or building society to recover your money. The funds in your account will remain your property however long you have been without contact. If you want to reclaim money in your dormant bank account, or think you have a legal claim on an account belonging to someone else, such as a deceased relative, you should obtain a form produced by the BBA either from your local

bank branch or your bank's head office. You will have to confirm that you would be able to prove your identity and, if the account is not in your name, provide proof of your legal claim on the account. It may be that there are legal steps you need to take before you are entitled to exercise your claim on another person's dormant account — your bank will tell you this — and you may need a solicitor. Completed forms should be returned to the bank's head office. If the bank is satisfied, you will be told the balance of the account and the amount of interest that has accrued. If it does not agree you have a claim, you can follow the

bank's complaints procedure. If you find a building society passbook which has been unused for some time, the Building Societies Association recommends that you take it to your local branch with some form of identification, including proof of your signature. Interest will be updated and advice given on which new account would best suit your needs. To claim money in someone else's name, you should again visit the branch or call the society's head office. If there is no probate, the society should be able to process your claim fairly rapidly. Evidence of your legal claim will be required, including a death certificate and will.

WHO OWNS WHOM NOW

Mergers and name changes have rendered many building societies extinct. The list below shows which banks and building societies now own some of these.

- **ABBAY NATIONAL** - Highgate, Oak Co-operative, State.
- **ALLIANCE & LEICESTER** - Leicester, Alliance, Boston & Skirbeck.
- **BIRMINGHAM MIDSHIRES** - Birmingham & Bridgwater, Ealing & Acton, Harrow, Hemel Hempstead, King Edward, Midshires.
- **BRADFORD & BINGLEY** - Bexhill-on-Sea, Birmingham Central, Chorley Permanent Benefit, Clapham Permanent, Dover & Folkestone, Foresters, Glamorgan, Hampshire, Hearts of Oak & Enfield, Hendon, Hibernian, Horsham, Housing & General, Hyde, Leamington Spa, Louth, Mablethorpe & Sutton, Merseyside, Padiham, Saddleworth Permanent Benefit, Scholes Permanent Benefit, Sheffield, Spread Eagle Perpetual Benefit, Stanley, Stockport Mersey, Target, United Provinces.
- **BRISTOL & WEST** - Brighton, Hove & Preston, Caledonian, Chelmsford & Essex, Cheshunt, Greater Brighton & District Permanent, Gresham Circle, North Heris, Pontypool Permanent, Poole, Royal Mutual Benefit, Wilchester Permanent.
- **BRITANNIA** - Alfreton, Blackheath, Colne, Denton, Driffield, Glantawe Permanent, Mornington, Over Darwen, Stoke-on-Trent Permanent, Welsh Economic, Westbury & District Permanent.
- **CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER** - Bedford, Bolton, Bury St. Edmunds, Cardiff, Colchester, Cotswold, Guardian, Heart of England, London Permanent, Mid-Sussex, North London, Peckham, Portsmouth, Waltham Abbey, Walthamstow.
- **HALIFAX** - Chertsey, Haydock & Golborne Permanent Society, Leeds Permanent, Newton, Wakefield.
- **NATIONAL & PROVINCIAL** - Burnley, Haslemere.
- **NATIONWIDE** - Anglia, City of Derry, Marlborough, Nationwide Anglia.
- **NORTHERN ROCK** - Blyth & Morpeth District Permanent, Deal & Walmer, East Liverpool Incorporated, Falkirk, Hartlepool & District, Kidderminster Permanent, Kilmarnock, Lancastrian, Lancashire, Liverpool Charter, Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, Musselburgh, North of England, Pioneer, Shields & Washington, South Shields Sun Permanent, Stockport & County Permanent, Surrey, United Kingdom, Walker & Byker Industrial Permanent, Wishaw Investment.
- **PORTMAN** - Bideford, Citizens Regency, North Wilts Ridgeway, Paddington, Peckham Permanent, Portman Wessex, Ramsbury, Regency & West of England, St. Martins le Grand, St. Pancras, Sussex Mutual, Wessex, Western Counties.
- **WOOLWICH** - Gateway, Grangemouth, London Grosvenor, New Cross, North Kent, Property Owners, Town & Country, Woolwich Equitable.

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Exchange tries its best and boobs again



PERSONAL INVESTOR GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Stock Exchange turnover topped £1,000 billion for the first time last year. That does not mean the share market has gained liquidity...

managers cannot be forced to use the new one and many have chosen not to. Trades in tens of thousands of pounds cost less, by upwards of 0.15 per cent according to the Exchange.

reliably what has happened to the FTSE 100 share index early on and shares now fluctuate more. A study by Professor Gordon Gemmill of the City University Business School found that the average gap between top shares' daily highs and lows had widened from 1.15 to 1.6 per cent.

o'clock in the morning. You can see the logic, provided fund managers do not just start later. But it sounds fatuous to the rest of us.

Some don't like it hot

Karen Woolfson explains what to do if you think you are suffering subsidence

While children and cricketers always look forward to a long, hot summer, many homeowners around the country and insurance companies are less excited by the prospect for another dry summer after three scorcher years between 1994 and 1996 will send insurance claims for subsidence soaring.

Direct Line says about 75 per cent of all subsidence claims are from properties built on clay. North London is notorious for this problem because dense housing magnifies the difficulties.

Insurers usually require the policyholder to pay the first £1,000 of any subsidence claim, which typically comes to about £5,000 for straightforward repairs, pruning or removing trees, strengthening parts of the building and redecorating areas affected.



Insurers fear the return of near-drought conditions

Subsidence rarely happens evenly, so one part of the building drops while the rest remains still and this uneven movement can cause cracks.

If your home is new, settlement cracks could appear almost anywhere but are most likely to be found in plaster where internal, non load-bearing walls meet load-bearing external walls.

However, if diagonal cracks suddenly start appearing around windows, doors or other

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Mutual Rate di called Pen

Mutuality's last gasp?

Nationwide Building Society has just unveiled a £12 million package for members to convince them of the benefits of remaining mutual. It has come one year too late.

The measures should have been launched last summer just after the society had succeeded in defeating by a significant margin the carpetbaggers who were pressing for conversion.

That way, the Nationwide's members would have had plenty of time to appreciate the finer points of the new scheme.

A second vote on whether the society should demutualise and hand over approximately £2,000 per member is looming next month.

Unfortunately for Nationwide, the benefits of the package — which includes cheaper cash withdrawals from ATMs and no fees for duplicate statements — tend to build up over time.

Likewise, new mortgage customers attracted to the society because they like the idea of not having to pay redemption charges on standard mortgages will not have their applica-



COMMENT

MARIANNE CURPHEY
Personal Finance
Deputy Editor

tions approved for several months, by which time Nationwide's fate will have been decided.

At present, mutuals are making efforts to demonstrate that they have the edge in savings and mortgage rates, although, as we report on page 64, some of the savings are dwarfed by the stock market growth of windfall shares.

Nevertheless, savers who stuck around for the conversion bonuses from Halifax, Alliance & Leicester and the two other societies had the option of moving on to mutuals with better interest rates when they were free to do so.

If Nationwide becomes a bank and triggers another wave of demutualisations among its fellow building societies, savers seeking a home for their funds will not have that luxury for long.

Above average

IT IS not often that fund managers expressly promise to give investors an "average" return on their money, as NPI is pledging to do with its new Managed Tracker Fund.

Designed to be part of NPI's existing pensions stable, the fund aims to ensure that its returns are just above the average performance of the biggest general managed funds.

This way, NPI says, policyholders can be confident that their pension fund will never appear at the bottom of the league table. However, it is also unlikely ever to turn up right at the top.

Given the poor past performance of some of NPI's other funds, this new frankness is a change for the better.

Rate discrepancies called to account



Perhaps the banks need a little of the discipline Jimmy Edwards dished out in *Whack-O*

High street banks and building societies could be made to transfer savers to higher rate accounts whenever they launch a more competitive product with the same or shorter notice periods, if proposals to tighten up the banking code are accepted.

David Davis, the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, is asking the Government to consider a number of ways of dealing with banks and building societies which launch attractive new accounts and then cut interest payments when bank rates are rising or static. The proposals will be submitted as part of the Treasury's review of banking practices launched earlier this month.

Mr Davis, Tory MP for Haltemprice and Howden, Humberside, said it was improper that some banks and building societies were using money from current customers to subsidise better rates to attract new savers. The proposals follow the debacle surrounding Northern Rock's account restructuring last

month. The Newcastle bank reduced the number of accounts from 11 to three, slashing rates without warning and leaving some 200,000 savers worse off.

The changes prompted a deluge of complaints from angry savers and resulted in an investigation by the Office of Fair Trading.

Northern Rock has since suspended all notice periods on savings accounts, allowing savers to move to accounts paying better interest. However, Mr Davis is concerned similar practices are endemic at other institutions. Offenders include Lloyds TSB, Midland, Alliance & Leicester, Bradford & Bingley and Scarborough Building Society.

Under Mr Davis's proposals, banks and building societies should inform each customer individually of any changes and savers should be given the option to move when a new account is introduced with higher rates but more restrictive withdrawal conditions than a similar account. If the terms are less restrictive, Mr Davis believes

institutions should move savers automatically.

Abolishing obsolete accounts and transferring savers into products paying better rates can cost banks and building societies millions. Bradford & Bingley spent £5 million a year in extra interest payments in 1996 when it reorganised 740,000 accounts, streamlining 200 different types of products into nine.

The British Bankers' Association raised concerns about the practicalities of implementing some of the ideas. A spokesman said: "We need to examine the logistics involved more closely. It's in everybody's interest to find a solution as quickly as possible and that's what we are aiming at."

The Building Societies Association said: "These are exactly the sort of issues that will be thrown into the discussions in due course. We are pleased Mr Davis has taken such an interest in this issue."

SUSAN EMMETT

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Source 1-3 Micropal buying price to selling price with gross income reinvested, 03/05/93 to 01/05/98: £6,000 became £14,181, an increase of £8,181. Based on: £3,000 invested in the UK Equity Fund became £6,875 (13/112 in sector), £2,000 invested in the UK Enterprise Fund became £4,818 (11/129 in sector), £1,000 invested in the UK Smaller Companies Fund became £2,488 (6/57 in sector).

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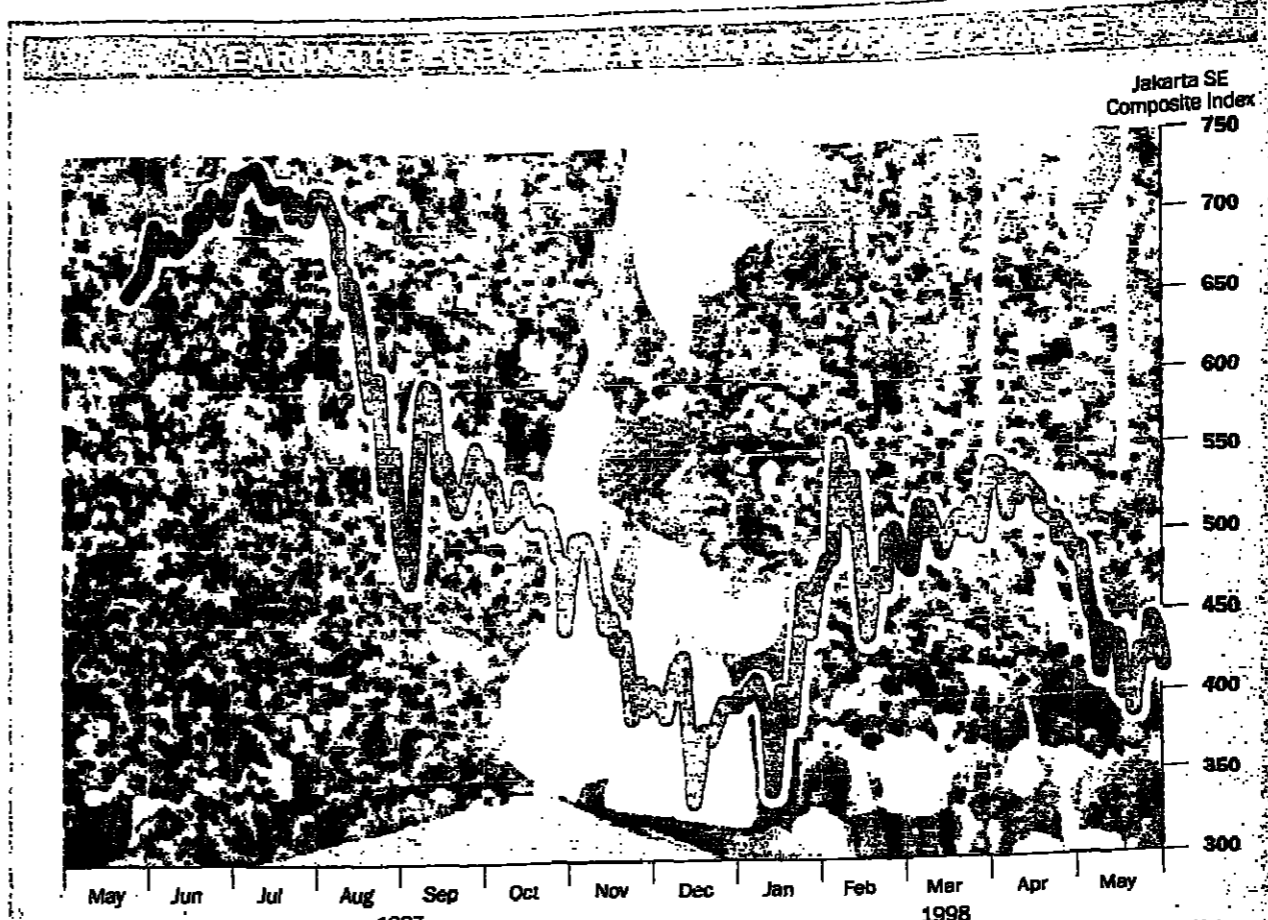
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'Keep clear of Asia for a year or two'

TRUST WATCH

With Suharto's passing Indonesia may be on the road to recovery, but analysts are cautious, says Patrick Collinson

The 32-year reign of Indonesia's President Suharto has ended amid a collapsing economy complete with widespread riots and looting in the capital, Jakarta. But fund managers - some of whom fled Jakarta during the turmoil - are warning British investors that Suharto's departure is not the signal to start buying in the region again.

Newly installed President Jusuf Habibie is faced with the crownsman of the Suharto regime and many expect a destabilising succession struggle in the year ahead, with the army playing a key role. Meanwhile, economic turmoil is set to continue, with the economy contracting by 10 per cent this year and inflation ballooning.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson said: "We do not feel that Suharto's resignation represents a turning point as far as the market is concerned. Essentially this is going to be a very long recovery story and one dependent on resolving some massive and crucial issues."

Schroders was among the UK companies which temporarily closed their Jakarta offices and evacuated staff to Singapore as fires raged across the city and the army shot at looters. But one of the evacuated managers, Elizabeth Soon, of Schroders, points out that despite Indonesia's size - it is Asia's third largest country, with a population of 200 million - the crisis needs to be kept in proportion.

She said: "To put the situation in context, the Indonesian stock market is currently valued at less than Tesco."

This will be of limited reassurance to investors who put their faith in the emerging markets bandwagon promoted by fund managers in the early and mid-1990s.

Figures from Standard & Poor's Micropal show that the average investor in a Far East (excluding Japan) unit trust has lost 33.4 per cent of his or her money in the past year, and nearly 40 per cent over two years. Investors who bought into high-risk single country funds investing in Indonesia have fared even worse. One small investment trust, Edinburgh Fund Managers' Java Fund, has collapsed in value by 72 per cent in just 12 months.

The Jakarta stock exchange has fallen from a high of 740 to below 400, while the freefall in the value of the currency, the rupiah, has magnified losses for sterling investors many times over. Jakarta's stock market darlings of the past - the companies connected to Suharto's family which were guaranteed a flow of government contracts - have plunged furthest and nobody is expecting a rebound. Why has Indonesia, once one of the proudest

"You cannot say that a country such as Indonesia is cheap. It has come a long way down but it is not cheap. The balance sheets of companies are loaded with foreign debt, the cost of servicing that debt has ballooned and domestic demand has disappeared. The long-term fundamentals in Indonesia have not been completely wiped away, such as the high savings rate and relatively low cost of production, but these are advantages increasingly available in other countries such as China."

Philip Ehrmann, head of global emerging markets at Gartmore:

"Habibie is still heavily involved in crony capitalism; it will take time for the problems to unwind. Look how long it took to sort out the problems of the US savings and loans companies in the 1980s and the continuing problems with recapitalising the Japanese bank - the good thing about a diversified emerging markets portfolio is that there are always places where there are positive things going on."

Jane Pickard, Asian fund manager at AIB Govett: "The economy is on its knees, so why should you want to invest unless you are a very brave hedge-fund manager. The best you can say is that most of the risks in the region now seem to be known. Investors have three choices - hold, sell out or double up. I would suggest the latter, but certainly not until later in the year. The lesson about making a return on capital will be the minimum forced on companies by shareholders."

Elizabeth Soon, Far Eastern Growth Fund manager at Schroders:

"The situation in the region remains finely balanced, although several countries, Thailand for example, are making progress towards restructuring their economies. We expect the economies in the region to take well into 1999 to show any signs of recovery. During this time markets will be volatile."

John Ross, investment communications director at Fidelity:

"It is too early to say if reforms will be adopted at a faster pace because Suharto has stepped down. His influence may still be felt, and there has not been much change in his original Cabinet. Part of Suharto's problem was that he was instituting some of the IMF reforms, which saw prices rising and subsidies falling. Habibie still has to implement the reforms, and there is still a lot of painful medicine to be taken and more social unrest. The scale of the problems in Indonesia is probably the worst in the region and companies have been the slowest to react."

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Since the start, the emphasis at Victoria Investment Club has been to enjoy themselves and to make a little extra

Champagne Charlies

Rioting in Indonesia, financial panic in Russia and volatility in the FTSE 100 index have failed to dampen optimism at the Victoria Investment Club in Truro, Cornwall. There, the champagne is flowing because the members' portfolio is now worth £33,385 — a paper profit of £11,047 plus £2,688 in cash. The portfolio's value is divided into units of equal worth so that members can easily work out what their individual holdings are.

Weekend Money has been monitoring the fortunes of two investment clubs since last June. Matthew Wall revisited them in the week that European and UK stock markets were hit by turmoil in Russia and the economic crisis in Asia looked set to deteriorate further, to see how they have coped with these economic rollercoasters

And, for the first time, the value of each unit has grown above £2. Some members have many more units than others, and any member can

buy and sell units at the prevailing unit price. The unit system is also useful for the possible occasion that a member wants to withdraw some cash or to leave the investment club altogether.

Recently, two members wanted to sell some units and the club was able to pay out £1,770 from its cash reserves, thus leaving the portfolio intact. The club has felt little effect from the dramatic events in Russia and Asia because it invests mostly in smaller UK companies. However, there have been two changes to the portfolio since the last visit by *The Times*.

The members have sold their entire holding of Robert Walters, the information technology recruitment agency, at a profit of £2,228.48, and have spent £1,500 on 2,337 shares in Albermarle & Bond, a pawnbroker listed on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM). The profit of more than £2,000 on Robert Walters is not a cause

for celebration, according to Derek Richards, a former chairman of the club. "The share price started dropping and we didn't know why, so we called an emergency meeting and decided to sell the lot," he said. "We sold at 475p. Then the share price bounced back almost immediately to over 500p." The new addition, Albermarle, was shortlisted after the monthly trawl through Company Refs, the company information source. Both turnover and profits were showing healthy increases and one of the club members, who is a retired bank manager, was particularly impressed with its cheque casting service, which he believes is a growing market.

The second investment club being monitored by *The*

Times is the Maydown Mergers Investment Club in Londonderry, Northern Ireland. It is now down to 13 members, and monthly contributions have been increased from £30 to £40 and everyone has been assigned a task, whether tracking existing shares held in the portfolio, or seeking out and researching new buying opportunities.

Mike Carroll, the club chairman, said: "We had to sell several shares to raise the cash to pay off the members who were leaving. Although this cost us £5,500, it has actually made our portfolio much more focused and it looks a lot healthier." Two financial stocks, Norwich Union and Woolwich, were ditched. Norwich made a profit of £324.72, while Woolwich made just £68.25. Their Powerscreen debacle still hurts, and the club eventually sold out of the troubled engineering company taking a £1,600 hit. Members draw comfort, however, from the fact that further delay would have cost them even more. The share price is now languishing at around 110p, compared with a year-high of 763.5p. The remaining stocks in the portfolio are all doing well except Chiroscience, the biotech company. Mayflower, the Midlands-based vehicle engineering company, is showing a

profit of more than 100 per cent for the club over two years. Galen Holdings, the pharmaceutical manufacturer, is up 72 per cent. The recent "yes" vote in the referendum in Ireland has turned the club's attention to the increasing investment opportunities north and south of the border. Some club members have been assigned the task of researching the Celtic "tiger" phenomenon, to look for up-and-coming companies.

Mr Carroll said: "We want to buy more stocks but we will be more cautious now. There is no harm in having cash and waiting for the right share to come along. "We will have a good look around and track a share for some months before buying."

A new managed fund has been launched by NPI, the mutual life insurer, for its pension portfolio, which aims to track world stock markets as well as investing in gilts and property (Marianne Curpley writes). Dubbed the "managed tracker", the fund is aimed at cautious investors who are happy to see an average return on their savings. The fund will replicate the

Fund for the careful

average portfolios of 83 UK-based managed funds, track the North American, Latin American, Japanese, European, UK and other markets, as well as index-linked gilts, cash and NPI's property fund. Alastair Lyons, the chief executive, said: "This is aimed at people who require a broad base to their investment and

high confidence that it will not underperform the sector." Ian Millward, investment marketing director at Chase de Vere Investments, the independent financial adviser, said: "It is not going to be a brilliant performer but it should be somewhere in the middle and that is the security many look for from their

pension. The charging structure is better value for lower premiums or lump sum investments than for premiums of more than £100 a month. "It is not a tracker in the conventional sense because, unlike Virgin or Legal & General, it is not seeking to replicate a single index. "NPI's managed funds have not performed particularly well in the past and this is a welcome addition."

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The price started falling, so we had an emergency meeting and sold at 475p. It jumped back to over 500p

for celebration, according to Derek Richards, a former chairman of the club. "The share price started dropping and we didn't know why, so we called an emergency meeting and decided to sell the lot," he said. "We sold at 475p. Then the share price bounced back almost immediately to over 500p." The new addition, Albermarle, was shortlisted after the monthly trawl through Company Refs, the company information source. Both turnover and profits were showing healthy increases and one of the club members, who is a retired bank manager, was particularly impressed with its cheque casting service, which he believes is a growing market. The second investment club being monitored by *The*

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ACIS's annual premium for vehicles under ten years old is £46.48. This compares with AA charging £103 and RAC charging £105 with European extension costing £48.50 (two weeks only) and £75 respectively.

AGC's European breakdown cover includes up to £250 for roadside repairs, no cost limit on dispatch of replacement parts, and repatriation of the insured vehicle if it cannot be repaired abroad.

Nationwide Building Society is cutting the cost of its credit card with effect from Monday. The standard rate will be reduced from 16.9 per cent to 16.5 per cent for all customers and the annual fee will be removed altogether.

Anyone taking out a new Nationwide credit card will be offered an introductory rate of 8.5 per cent APR for the first six months. Additional benefits include free purchase protection cover, free travel accident insurance and 52 days' interest free credit.

Increases in savings rates will boost the returns for many savers at Birmingham Midshires. From Tuesday, the building society's SmartStart children's account, which is also available to young people up to the age of 22 who are in full-time education, pays 7.50 per cent on the minimum opening investment of £25.

For balances of more than £500, the return rises to 7.75 per cent gross pa.

The Quantum Instant Plus branch-based account, where rates are linked to the number of transactions made each year, offers a 4.50 per cent on more than £500 and 6.25 per cent on balances of more than £5,000.

For more information, call Birmingham Midshires' Retailine on 0645-720 721.

LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS table with columns for Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid.

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS table with columns for Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid.

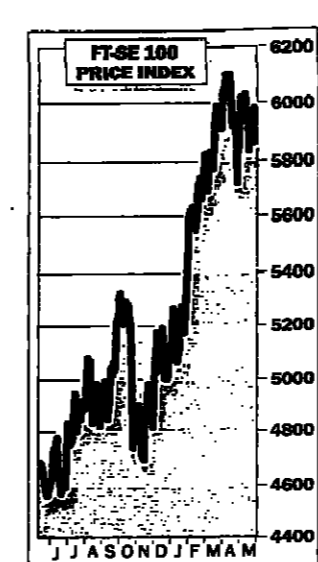
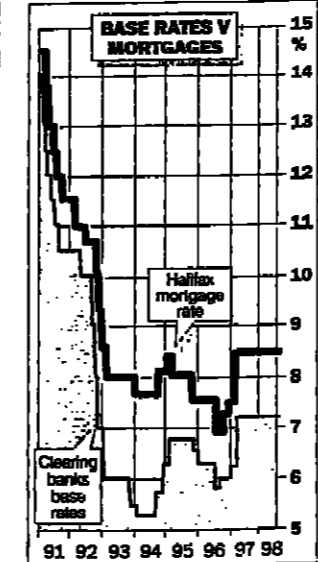
CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS table with columns for Card type, Interest per month, APR, Fee per annum.

PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS table with columns for Lender, APR, Monthly payment on £5,000 for 3yrs with insurance, no insurance.

RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

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Source: Moneyfacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01638 476747)



NATIONAL SAVINGS table with columns for Gross rate, At tax rates, Minimum investment, Notice, Contact.

PENSION ANNUITIES table with columns for All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance.

Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose table with columns for Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes.

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

Table with columns for Investment (£), Company, Standard Rate (%).

PIBS

Table with columns for Fixed Rate, Gross coupon, Buying price, % Gross yield, Issue price, Minimum purchase amount.

LARGER LENDERS

Table with columns for Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes.

LARGER LOANS

Table with columns for Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes.

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Table with columns for Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes.

LEASING INVESTMENTS

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

LONDON LIFE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

INDIA UNITED

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

ABBAY LIFE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

COMMERCIAL UNION

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

PRUDENTIAL

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

SCOTTISH PROVIDENT

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

BLACK HORSE LIFE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

CONFESSIONAL LIFE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

ROYAL HERITAGE LIFE ASSURANCE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

GENERAL ACCIDENT & GENERAL INVESTMENT

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

ROYAL LIFE ASSURANCE

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

SCOTTISH AMicable

Table with columns for Bid, Offer, Why, %.

Advertisement for Takin, featuring a woman's face and text about financial services.

Advertisement for 'Take a long haul at losing credit', discussing credit issues and financial solutions.

Advertisement for 'gold mine', promoting investment opportunities.

Advertisement for 'DIRECT LINE', listing various financial products and services.



SETS APPEAL 54
Graham Searjeant seeks a better deal for small investors.

WEEKEND MONEY

SLEEPING BEAUTY 53

What to do if you find long-forgotten savings accounts



A fun way to keep warm in the chill of dawn — but where did we leave our jackets? The hire company will be less than amused

When the partying is over...

Clare Stewart has some sobering thoughts for bright young things

May balls and post-exam celebrations traditionally add up to a time of expense and excess for many students. Once you have put down your pen for the last time in the last exam, your academic worries may be over, but you still need to take care with your financial arrangements.

Splashing out on an outfit for a black tie and ballgown event can be a pricey business even if you hire rather than buy. But you could be stung for an even bigger bill unless you take care.

If you hire an outfit, the shop may offer an optional insurance cover. Moss Bros, for example, makes a standard charge of £2.95 per outfit which covers any accidental damage, but not loss of the garment or malicious damage.

So if during a night of dancing till dawn, you fling off your jacket, only to realise when the survivors' photograph is taken that you are quite cold and have no idea where you left it, you could be in for a sobering experience.

Accidental loss of hired outfits may not be covered by a student insurance policy. Endsleigh, the biggest student insurer, for example, does not cover hired outfits, precisely because they are not personal possessions. The hire shop may charge you a full replacement value or, if it has asked

for a deposit, you may forfeit the amount.

If the outfit has been bought, check that your personal insurance covers the value of the dress or dinner jacket. Policies may have a relatively low limit of cover for single items — about £300 is typical — which might be fine if you have kitted yourself out at the local charity shop, but not if you have paid rather more. For example, the special May Week offer for a complete black tie outfit starts from £350 at Ede & Ravenscroft in Cambridge, gents outfitters and gown suppliers to the university.

When the post-exam euphoria has died down, students should also look carefully at what their insurance covers if they are planning to leave possessions in rented accommodation or halls of residence during the summer vacation.

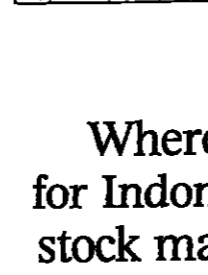
Typically possessions stored in locked college storage facilities or at the parents' house, are covered in the same way as in term-time but items left in rented accommodation, off campus, may only have limited cover during holidays.

Endsleigh says that cover for items left in an unoccupied house during holidays is limited to £200, while higher value items for which you can take out increased cover during the term will not be covered at all if they are left at unoccupied accommodation during the vacations.

INSIDE



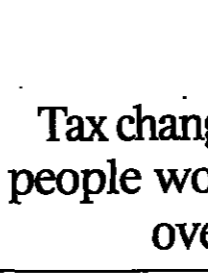
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Tax changes hit people working overseas

BUSINESS NEWS PAGES 26-31

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth

Stay put in Russia

Flemings advises

Russia became the latest country to seek help from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) this week as it sank into turmoil on the back of fears about the budget deficit and the weakness of the rouble (Caroline Merrell writes).

The stock market fell dramatically and stabilised only when the Government increased interest rates by 150 per cent to keep off the currency speculators and the International Monetary Fund hinted that it would be prepared to make a £410 million

loan available within the next few days. The fall in the Russian market was followed by other markets around the world, including the London Stock Exchange, and the emerging economies of Eastern Europe, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic markets all dropped on news of

the problems being experienced in Moscow. Financial advisers and fund managers with clients holding money in Russian funds were advising them not to panic.

They pointed out that investments in emerging markets have to be viewed as long-term ventures, which have to

be held for between five and ten years at least. Flemings, the merchant bank, for instance, has one of the biggest exposures to Russia, and last year launched a unit trust which invests in Eastern Europe.

The bank believes that the problems in Russia are only temporary, and is bullish over the long term. Its main Russian fund has fallen by 32 per cent over the past year but over three years, the fund has risen by nearly 150 per cent.

Janet Bush, Page 30

Carpetbaggers circle Nationwide

The building society movement could lose its biggest player if next month's vote on the future of the Nationwide goes against the staunchly pro-mutual board. The poll of the society's 4.5 million members is the second time in a year its position as the UK's biggest building society has been threatened.

Last year the society defeated by three to one an attempt by Michael Hardern, a freelance butler, and four other pro-conversion candidates to become board members to force the society to convert to a bank. This year, however, the poll on conversion is almost certain to be much closer as the society now estimates that it could have as many as 600,000 "carpetbaggers", who have joined the society merely in anticipation of a windfall.

Members are also being asked whether the society should convert instead of being asked to elect the rather eccentric Mr Hardern on to the board of an institution that could have a market capitalisation of between £7 billion and £10 billion. This may push the vote in favour of conversion and £2,000 windfalls.

Nationwide claims that the vote will again go in favour of mutuality but this week at the annual building society gathering in Bournemouth it felt threatened enough to launch a series of measures underlining the advantages of remaining mutual. These included scrapping ATM charges and dropping standard charges for redeeming a mortgage, costing the society £12 million a year. If the society does lose the vote, conversion is almost inevitable or it may succumb to a predator interested in buying in to the banking sector, such as Lloyds TSB.

The loss of the Nationwide would be a severe blow to the building society sector which has been stridently defending its stance by offering its members lower mortgages and higher savings rates than its converted brethren.

Some analysts believe that a conversion by the Nationwide would lead to more flotations. Bradford & Bingley, for instance, could be a society to watch. Christopher Rodrigues, the group of chief executive, is on record as saying that

BETTER OFF WITH A MUTUAL ?		
Mortgage costs and savings rates compared		
THE CONVERTS		
	Mortgage costs (six months)	Deposit interest (six months)
Halifax	£2,483.58	£89.87
Northern Rock	£2,530.44	£180.07
Alliance & Leicester	£2,475.09	£148.07
Woolwich	£2,483.58	£171.18
THE BUILDING SOCIETIES		
Portman	£2,413.67	£135.89
Nationwide	£2,362.02	£167.97
Bradford & Bingley	£2,399.40	£168.72
NEW ENTRANTS		
Direct Line	£2,292.08	£151.42
Sainsbury	£2,355.36	£182.50

Mortgage costs based on a £50,000 standard rate repayment mortgage (excluding Miras). Savings interest gained on £5,000 in a instant access account

being a mutual fits in with the business strategy of the society, at the moment. The B&B is watching the Nationwide vote with interest.

It is now eight months since the last building society floated, and a year since the Halifax made its stock market debut. Since then, some mutuals have undercut the mortgage rates offered by the converted banks and others have offered enhanced savings rates or bonus schemes. Meanwhile, some of the converted societies have widened margins, to grow more profits.

Of the former top 20 building societies, Alliance & Leicester, Woolwich and Northern Rock have among the highest margins, while the mutuals Bradford & Bingley, Yorkshire, Coventry and Skipton have among the lowest.

Yet while building societies have been vocal in proclaiming the benefits of mutuality, closer examination of the figures shows that although mutuals do give better rates, the rewards for savers and borrowers may be marginal, especially when compared with windfall pay-

CAROLINE MERRELL AND SUSAN EMMETT

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SATURDAY MAY 30 1998

Eighteen journeys

The Prince of Wales visiting Dairry

On road the Pr

SHOPPING... 45 FOOD & DRIN

هكذا من الأصل

FAITH



Star-crossed: how can a Christian believe in astrology?

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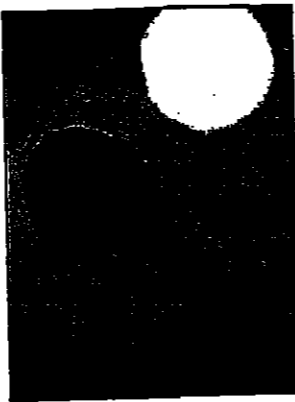
FOOD & DRINK



How restaurants handle sozzled celebrities

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TRAVEL



Night sights: a new way of looking at big game

PAGE 27

ANNE ROBINSON



Why do clever women feel the need to sound cute?

PAGE 3

THE TIMES
WEEKEND

SATURDAY MAY 30 1998

Eighteen journeys, 32 engagements and 102 dignitaries: two uplifting days in the life of the Prince of Wales



The Prince of Wales visiting Danby on the North Yorkshire moors where he was received with obvious affection. He is cheerful and informal and, said one photographer, "unlike some of his family he always smiles"

On the road with the Prince



Brian MacArthur trying to keep up with the Prince

Brian MacArthur admires the stamina of the heir to the throne on a hectic tour of Yorkshire

The Prince of Wales had already had a hard day when he arrived at a deserted Euston Station at midnight and boarded the Royal Train, its dark-brown livery gleaming under the floodlights behind a police cordon. The day had started at Highgrove with a near-disaster. The Prince had intended to fly to London for the Order of the Bath service at Westminster Abbey led by the Queen, but his helicopter was unable to land because of fog. So he had been driven at full pelt up the M4 and had arrived late. He had then visited two of the charities he supports which raise money from industry for the voluntary sector — the Kids Company in South London, where he met some of the young people it helps, and Gifts-in-Kind UK where he met the donors. He had dined at the Café Royal as a guest of the Marketing Group of Great Britain. Now he was starting an overnight journey to Yorkshire for a two-day visit to the North Yorkshire Moors and the

Continued on page 3

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The best - in black and white

Bond Street has become the world's hottest street, says Nick Foulkes

The world of luxury has a new litmus test. Forget Fifth Avenue, Rodeo Drive, the Croisette or the Avenue Montaigne; if it doesn't have a shop on Bond Street it is not a luxury brand.

As an address, Bond Street has always lent an air of sedate dignity to commercial endeavour but now, as the century draws to a close, it is more fashionable and downright glamorous than at any point in its eventful history. In the global retail village that is planet Earth, Bond Street is the world's shop window.

David Duncan Smith, managing director of Louis Vuitton, says: "Bond Street has always been recognised as an address a company would want on its letterhead, but it didn't mean the store was profit making. Now the picture has changed out of all recognition."

Louis Vuitton is just one of an armada of flagship stores to open on Bond Street in the past couple of years. Prada, Ralph Lauren, Versace and Armani have all sprung up on the Bond Street strip.

And, what's more, the previously unfashionable Oxford Street end of New Bond Street has benefited, with younger brands such as Tommy Hilfeger, Guess and Versace Jeans Couture opening where rents are cheaper.

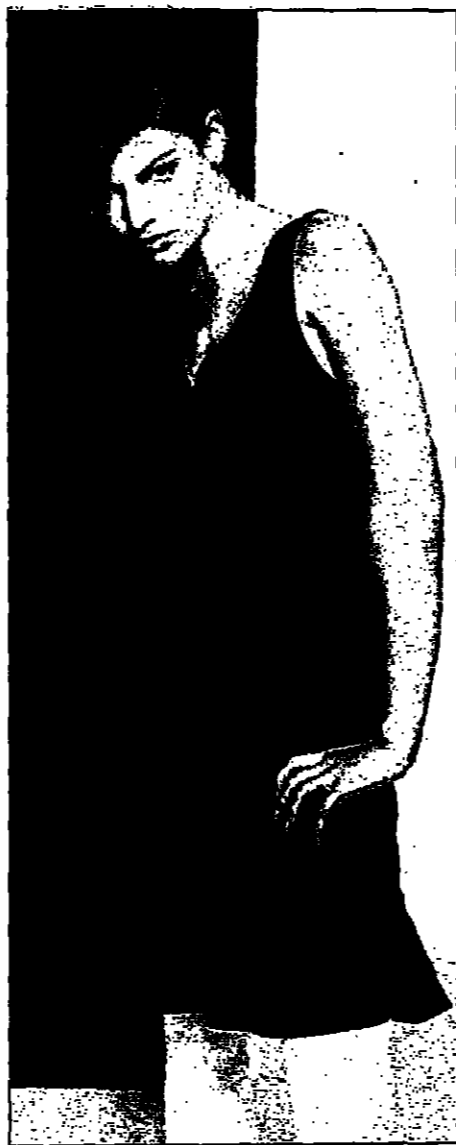
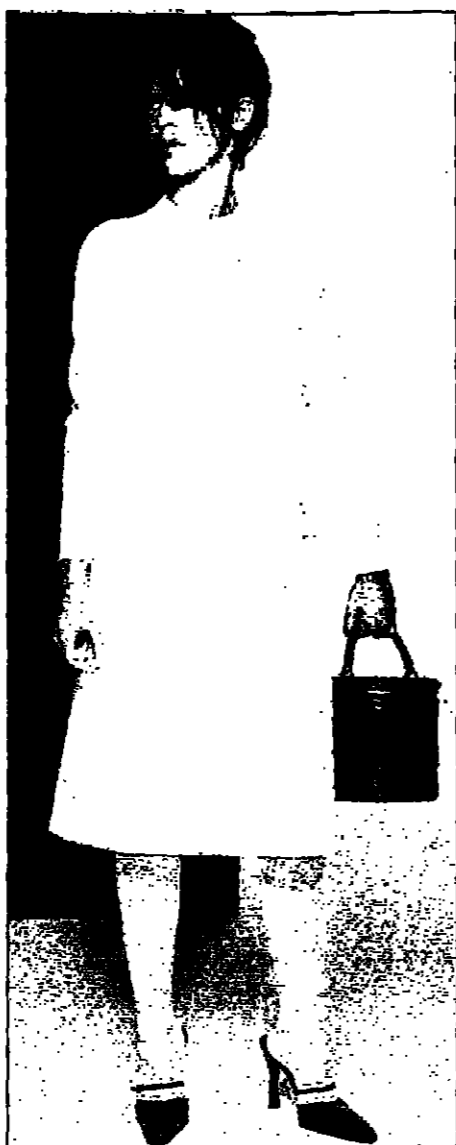
Rents are most expensive on the stretch between Royal Arcade and Grafton Street, where luxury moguls pay about £325 a square foot. Compared to that, the £175 to £200 being asked per square foot between Brook Street and Oxford Street must seem a positive steal.

And those brands unable or unwilling to slug it out on a pound-per-square-foot basis are taking sites in side streets such as Conduit Street. Names on, or soon to be on, Conduit Street include Berluti, Moschino, Krizia, Yamamoto and Vivienne Westwood.

Bond Street's revival can, to a degree, be pinned to London's present status as the fashion, design and gastronomy capital of the world: both *Vogue* and the American magazine *Town & Country* celebrate booming Britain in their June editions.

It is not only the "cool Britannia" factor that sets Bond Street apart from its foreign rivals. "Bond Street has an intimacy that few fashion streets in the world can compete with," Mr Duncan Smith says. "You can walk up Bond Street, criss-crossing it easily, you don't have to cross a boulevard with traffic screaming in all directions."

And, unlike some of its Continental and American rivals, which are set in exclusive areas housing only boutiques and luxury stores, Bond Street is surrounded by good-quality department stores and high-street labels such as Warehouse, Jigsaw, Next and Reiss. The street may no longer sell the same litmus it did in the 18th century ("Balsamick Essence, with several other Cosmetics", wash balls and aniseed) or house such strange exhibits as the embalmed head of Oliver Cromwell, but it has become the street to shop in.



TOP LEFT: White cotton-knit twin set, £620; A-line skirt, £390; black leather case, £350; mules, £180, Louis Vuitton, 17-18 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-399 4050). Opaque tights, £2.50, Jonathan Aston (0116-256 2368)

TOP RIGHT: Black dress, £39.99, Next, mail order (0345 100600). Tights, as before

ABOVE: Black slash-front stretch top, £25, Warehouse, branches nationwide (0171-278 3491)

RIGHT: Black and white graffiti jacket, £330; matching trousers, £155; black grosgrain court shoes, £230, Moschino, 28-29 Conduit Street, W1 (0171-318 0555)

FAR RIGHT: White linen pouch-pocket top, £25; leather and Perspex shoulder bag, £200, Miu Miu, 123 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-409 0900)

ABOVE: White cotton V-neck T-shirt, £16; black leather pencil skirt, £125; black leather criss-cross wedge sandals, £59; black leather shoulder bag, £35, Jigsaw, 126-127 New Bond Street, W1. White opaque tights, £2.50, Jonathan Aston, department stores nationwide (0116-256 2368)

THE BEST OF BOND ST

Designers: Versace, 34-36 Old Bond Street (0171-496 1862); Louis Vuitton, 17-18 New Bond Street (0171-399 4050); Gucci, 32 Old Bond Street (0171-629 2716); Donna Karan, 19 New Bond Street (0171-486 3100); Loewe, 130 New Bond Street (0171-493 3914); Diffusion: Emporio Armani, 112a Bond Street (0171-491 8080); Collezioni Giorgio Armani, 43 New Bond Street (0171-491 8888); Versace Jeans Couture, 113-115 New Bond Street (0171-355 2700); DKNY, 27 Old Bond Street (0171-493 8089)

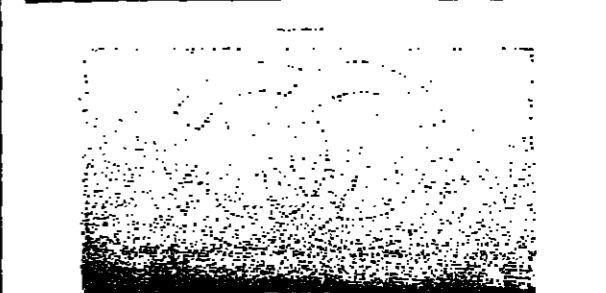
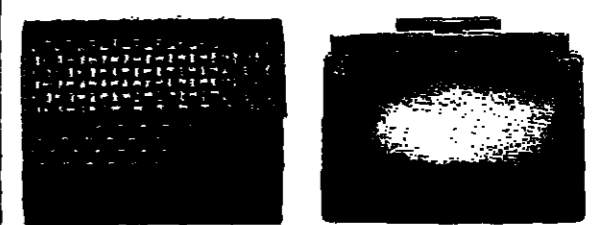
Jewels: Cartier, 175-176 New Bond Street (0171-493 6962); Asprey, 165 New Bond Street (0171-493 6787); Bvlgari, 172 New Bond Street (0171-972 9669)

Bags: Hermès, 155 New Bond Street (0171-499 8855); Tanneer Krolle, 38 Old Bond Street (0171-491 2243)

Photographs by ANNA STEVENSON
Hair by Damien Carney for Andrew Jose Salon (0171-323 4675); Make-up by Firyal using Clinique; Model: Liberty; Styling by Amandip Uppal

THREE OF A KIND

For the plain but classic accessory to complement a stylish handbag, try a monochrome purse - available in department stores and high-street chains on Bond Street. Here are three of the best. LISA GRAINGER



ABOVE: White leather purse with embroidered logo, £225, Chanel, 26 Old Bond Street (0171-493 5040). TOP LEFT: Black leather weave purse, £89, Deasmo, Fenwicks, 63 Old Bond Street (0171-629 9161). TOP RIGHT: Black leather mini-purse, £85, Tanner Krolle, 38 Old Bond Street (0171-491 2243); Harrods, 87-135 Brompton Road (0171-730 1234)

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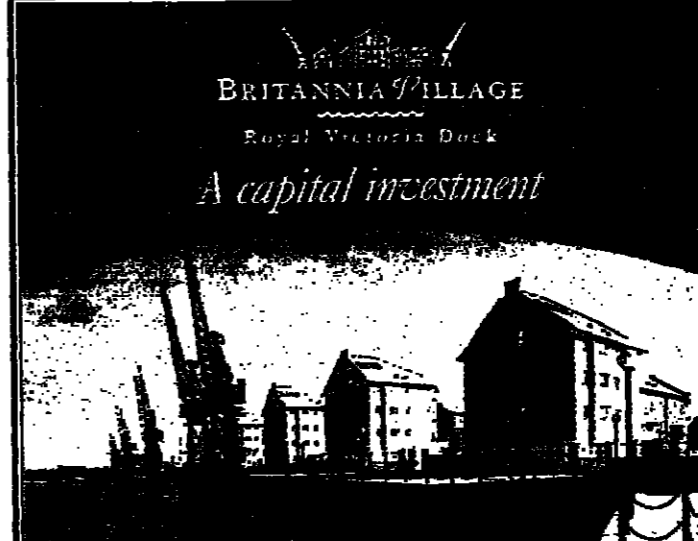
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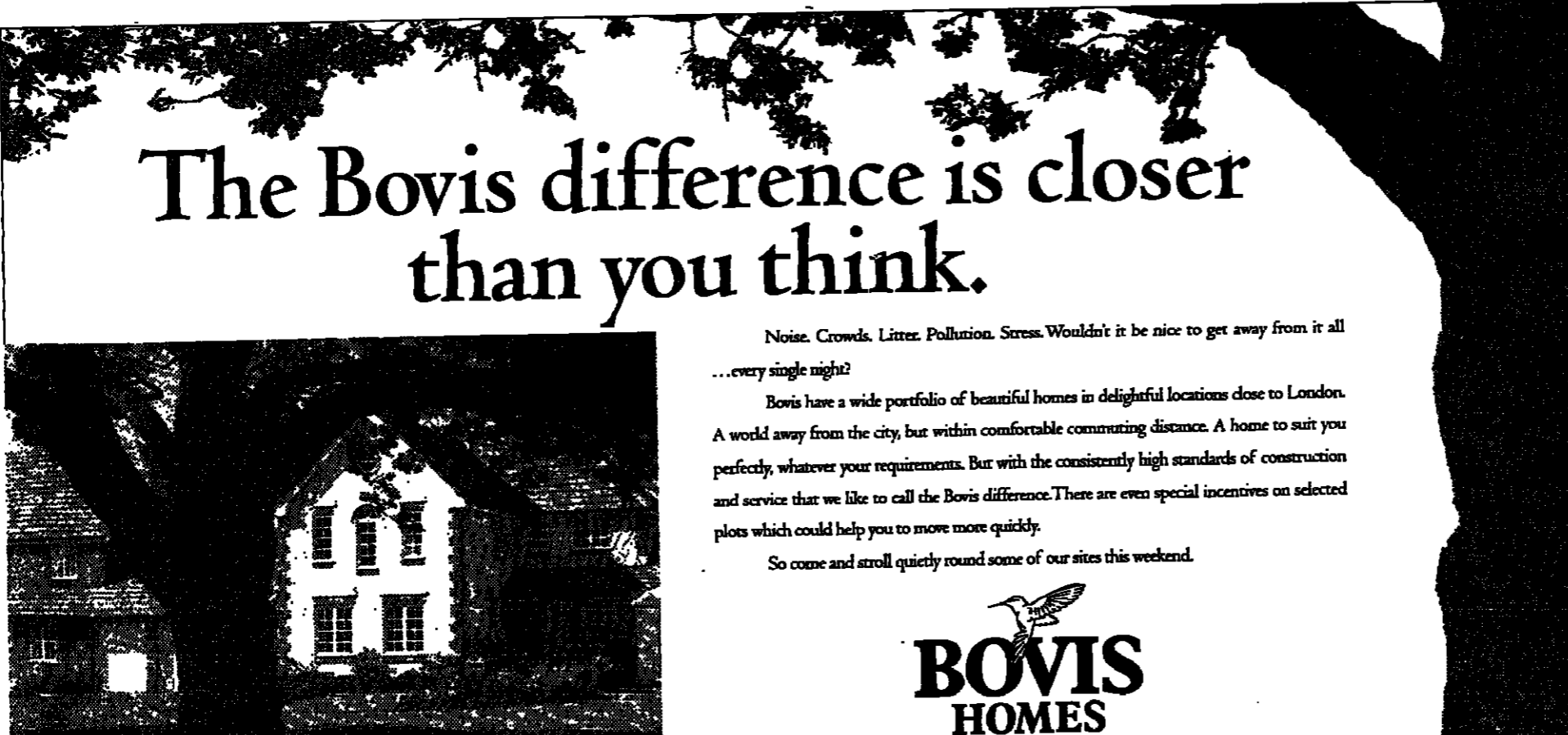
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Beware of what you are plotting

Rachel Kelly warns of the hidden dangers of extending your garden

For many it is a dream come true. Buy the unused field at the end of the property, lay a lawn, plant some flowerbeds, and your home has a garden big enough for the kids to play at one end and the grown-ups to relax in peace at the other.

But planners are warning that those who extend their gardens into adjacent agricultural land, without planning permission, risk having to plough up their patios. And controls are likely to be tightened as concern grows about the loss of green fields to concrete and bricks.

The Government has dropped its predecessor's proposals to relax planning controls to ensure the countryside does not become urbanised. The Council for the Protection of Rural England, worried about the loss of rural landscape, is keen to limit the construction of garden furniture, buildings and fencing. Home owners are increasingly left confused and bewildered by a myriad of planning regulations.

The garden dilemma is part of a wider confusion about planning controls generally. Richard Carslake is an Exeter chartered surveyor who is in the midst of investigating whether or not he should seek permission to build a stable for his children's ponies beside his home in Devon.

It is unclear whether the area on which he wants to build is defined as garden or agricultural land. Similar con-

fusion surrounds stables which can be classed as either domestic or agricultural buildings.

If the land and stables are defined as agricultural Mr Carslake will require planning permission, otherwise he may not. He says: "I don't want to pay the planning application fee unless I have to."

Planning fees have increased dramatically in the past few years since they were established in the 1980s. The lowest fee for planning applications for gardens, originally £32, rose to £95 last October. But fees do not usually dissuade homeowners from omitting to make applications, says David Rose from the planning regulator, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). Sometimes people do not apply deliberately.

Glyn Thomas is a senior planning officer from East Devon District Council. He cites a case in which a woman built ornamental bridges, a dovecote and a summerhouse in her garden without permission. "It was almost a town park," he says, although she was given advice in 1985 and knew she needed planning permission. The woman attracted considerable public support and, since building had taken place over a long time, the council granted her retrospective planning permission in 1986.



Having spent £10,000 on turning a rubbish dump into a garden, retired couple Martin and Pauline Leadley have been ordered to plough it up after a planning dispute

Other people are not always so lucky. A retired Nottinghamshire couple, Martin and Pauline Leadley, spent almost £10,000 turning a rubbish tip into a garden — only to be ordered to plough it up last December. In other cases, people apply for planning permission but build more than they are supposed to.

A couple in the village of Foxhill in Eden in the Lake District are currently appealing against the National Park Authority's ruling to force them to turn the garden they built without planning permission into a field.

Mr and Mrs Dixon applied for planning permission in 1992 to demolish and rehabilitate a house and barn, but did not receive consent to alter the garden which they subsequently extended on to a field, raising the level of the sloping land to build a flat lawn for their children to play on.

The Dixons' surveyor, Richard Moss, speaking on their behalf, says: "If they didn't

'It's unclear what needs planning permission'

have this extra bit of land they would have no land at all for their children to play on. When you consider the size of the Lake District, the loss of a few yards of land to a garden is not a major crime, really."

In the absence of legislation, piecemeal steps are being taken to halt the march from green to brown. New local authority brochures will address the public lack of awareness about the planning process. The brochures, produced by the RTPI, will highlight the little-known fact that planning permission is required to extend your garden.

Among other things, the leaflets illustrate how to object to a planning application, what to do if you are refused

planning permission and how to apply for permission to build a granny annexe or a swimming pool.

Mr Rose says: "The planning process is complicated. It's not clear what needs permission and what doesn't. We are doing things to make it easier, including the development of interactive kiosks. They would work in a similar way to tax self-assessment forms, with people assessing whether or not they need planning permission. This shouldn't be beyond the technology for the next century."

Such efforts will go some way to preventing patios and rose bushes from impinging too much upon the rural landscape. But people planning to alter their garden should contact their council planning department to ascertain whether or not planning permission is necessary.

A leaflet reprinted by the Government, Planning Permission: the Homeowner's Guide, is available from 0870-122 6226.



An aerial view of the Leadleys' landscaped one-acre garden in Nottinghamshire

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Vincey, a snow leopard with tooth problems, being treated by Dr Kertesz on *Rolf's Amazing World of Animals*



Dr Kertesz working on a badger. Though tougher than a polar bear's teeth, badgers teeth get worn from eating earthworms

For most of the week, Peter Kertesz is a West End dentist dealing with humans. Come Friday, he switches to working on the teeth of animals, ranging from elephants to tiny monkeys. "The mouth is the gateway to the rest of the body and must be kept healthy to prevent infection," he says. "After working on a Siberian tiger, human beings are a child's play."

Andrew Morgan meets the dentist who works on animals

chimpanzees, gorillas, leopards — even confiscated dancing bears in Greece. Dr Kertesz has worked in France on a trained killer whale with a tooth abscess. It could not be anaesthetised and obligingly opened its mouth at the poolside for treatment. A few years ago, he returned to his native Hungary where he dealt with elephants in the zoo and circus at Budapest. "It was emotional because I visited both places as a boy and, suddenly, I was back there working on the animals."

weighing 60lb for elephant work. Engineering firms developed specialist equipment, like air tools, suction machines and drill bits. The ability to move equipment rapidly has helped Dr Kertesz become one of Europe's leading animal dental practitioners. "I realised straight away that animals can't be treated like human beings. The approach and treatment must be different," he adds. "We don't put on crowns or straighten teeth because of pressures put on them. It's largely a question of making them healthy."

His patients include badgers, foxes, deer, wild cats and otters from Scotland, although staff look after the many hedgehogs brought in, descaling their teeth ultrasonically. Recently he extracted damaged canine teeth from a fox which had been caught on a wire. Its hind leg had to be amputated and it could not return to the wild, so it stayed at St Tiggywinkles. Badgers get worn teeth from grinding on earth worms and fractures from accidents. Ex-

tracting their teeth is harder than with a polar bear because of their toughness. Dr Kertesz always tries to maintain an animal's ability to hold prey with its teeth. "An otter unable to grasp a fish will slowly lose its edge," he says. "A tooth which has lost half its length can still be useful and we aim to make it healthy." Amazingly, he once recognised his own work on a dead badger taken to the hospital. "It was satisfying because the work had held out while the animal had caught prey for four years," he says.

His West End waiting-room has pictures of his wildlife work. "My patients are always interested in where we're going next," he says. "I tell them working in the surgery is a piece of cake compared with a zoo, which can be hard labour. It can be quite nice getting back to humans because they can actually tell me what the problem is."

A VET WRITES

Q An aged aunt has charged us with the care of a tortoise she bought in the early Sixties. The children want to name him/her, but we don't know how to sex tortoises. A I assume you've inherited a Mediterranean tortoise. In these species, the males have a longer tail (more than an inch) and the plastron (the underneath of the shell) is concave. Females have a short tail (about half an inch), the plastron is flat or marginally convex and they are always larger than males.

Q Our cat Wilfred developed a prominent red lump nearly as big as a pea. The vet diagnosed a rodent ulcer and prescribed hormone tablets. He warned us that surgery might be necessary. What is a rodent ulcer and what causes it? A Rodent ulcers are a type of skin eruption of uncertain origin. Allergic reactions and deficiencies in the immune system are possible causes and self-inflicted injury from scratching or licking might be implicated.

Q I was horrified to read about the Newfoundland dogs that died from heat stroke in a van. Sometimes dogs have to travel. What can be done to avoid this type of tragedy? A Best of all, leave your dog at home in hot weather. Otherwise, travel very early or late in the day. If you're caught in a traffic jam open every window and the sun roof, if there is one. Alternatively, think about rail travel.

Q Can you tell me anything about feline leprosy? Our seven-year-old cat has had four operations to remove lumps but they have recurred. Our other, older, cat has never developed any lumps. Could he be a carrier? A So-called feline leprosy is associated with infection by bacteria of the Mycobacteria family. It's quite rare. It's suggested the infection comes from contact with rodents. I think your older cat would have developed lesions by now if he was a carrier.

JAMES ALCOCK
Write to The Times Vet, Weekend, The Times, 1, Pennington Street, London E14 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.

ADOPT ME

GINNY is a five-year-old male black Rosette guinea pig which is looking for a new home after being brought in to the centre last February. Although he is a healthy, happy guinea pig who loves being handled he does need to be kept alone as he bullies other guinea pigs and rabbits.



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Today The Times offers readers the opportunity to buy Home Farm, a Practical Guide to the Good Life by Paul Heiney for £14.99, £2 less than the normal price of £16.99. Times columnist Paul Heiney addresses the needs of both country lovers and country dreamers, including advice for those working on the tiniest of plots, even down to the scale of a window-box. Not only does Home Farm show you how to grow and harvest the fruits of the earth, it reveals the traditional secrets of transforming the best ingredients into the tastiest and healthiest produce. It is a fascinating read for anyone, with or without green fingers, combining the author's wonderful sense of humour with his deep knowledge of planting, growing and enjoying the fruits of his labour.

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It's reigning cats and dogs



How much is that doggie in the window? Although it hasn't got a waggly tail, the ceramic Great Dane (at £700) is one of the dozens of creatures on sale at Fitch's Ark, Susannah Fellows' gallery in London. Though several people were humming the song at the private view this week of Reigning Cats and Dogs, the latest exhibition at Fitch's Ark, few could have sung it with as much panache as Ms Fellows herself — she opened the gallery as a sideline to her better-known roles as a leading lady in West End musicals. She succeeded Elaine Paige as Evita and has also had roles in Me and My Girl and Aspects of Love. And like the best musicals, Fitch's Ark is having an extended run. With motherhood and her stage career taking up so much of her time, Ms Fellows wanted to give up the four-year-old gallery. But four local gallery-goers liked the Ark so much that they bought it — provided that Ms Fellows stayed at the helm for three days a week. One of the new owners is Graham Norton-Standen, a former clarinetist

Alasdair Riley meets some of the animals in Susannah's Ark

Artful creatures for sale in the gallery with the London and Boston symphony orchestras and now head of a software company. He and his wife Andrea have bought at least 40 art works from Fitch's Ark to go in their home in nearby St John's Wood. "There's something real and living

about animals which are about us all the time and it is much the same with the art they inspire," he says. "With a landscape painting you have to imagine you are there. But a sculpture of a dog or a cat is more alive and immediate, drawing on deeper feelings. It can bring back memories of childhood which you want to experience again." Given Ms Fellows' career, it is not surprising to find a strong showbiz clientele at the Ark. John Cleese, Anita Dobson, Björk and Tori Amos are regular customers. The actress Jenny Seagrove says: "I've bought dozens of things there, from treats for kids to serious presents." Reigning Cats and Dogs includes bronze animals (£65-£1,100) by Rosemary Cook; plates, vases and bowls (£40-£425) by Laurel Keeley; jewellery (£100-£39) by Penny Williams; and ceramics (£295-£700) by Nick Mackman, who made the Great Dane in the window. Reigning Cats and Dogs runs until June 13 at Fitch's Ark, 6 Clifton Road, Little Venice, London W9 1SS (telephone: 0171-266 0202).

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TRAVEL CONTINUES ON PAGES 36 & 37

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Safari. Caped crusader braves country. Oliver Bennett. The Pyramids. 4 days at the Pyramids, Cairo & Alexandria.



Caped crusader braves bear country

Canada - 29

THE TIMES TRAVEL

We're all going on a summer holiday

Family trips - 35



Safari brings light to African night

Oliver Bennett stays a step ahead of the game at night using infra-red goggles to watch Kenya's animals

There it is, whispered George, the guide. "Hippo, hippo." It was 11pm in the Masai Mara national park in Kenya, and I peered through my pair of heavy, infra-red binoculars to see a barely identifiable but undeniably large animal chomping peacefully on the tall grass.

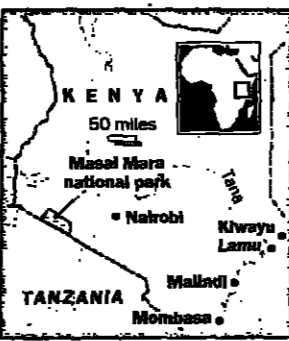
We were testing the Mara Intrepids Club's new high-tech game-viewing technology, called Night Sight, with its God-like promise in the brochure to "turn the night into daylight".

Prior to this, anyone who wanted to watch animals at night went out in a Jeep equipped with high-intensity beams. One viewed the animals as they sped away from the light, or sat frozen like rabbits on a country road.

The idea is that you creep up on the animals as they go about their business - killing, eating, copulating, sleeping - in their most natural, undisturbed way.



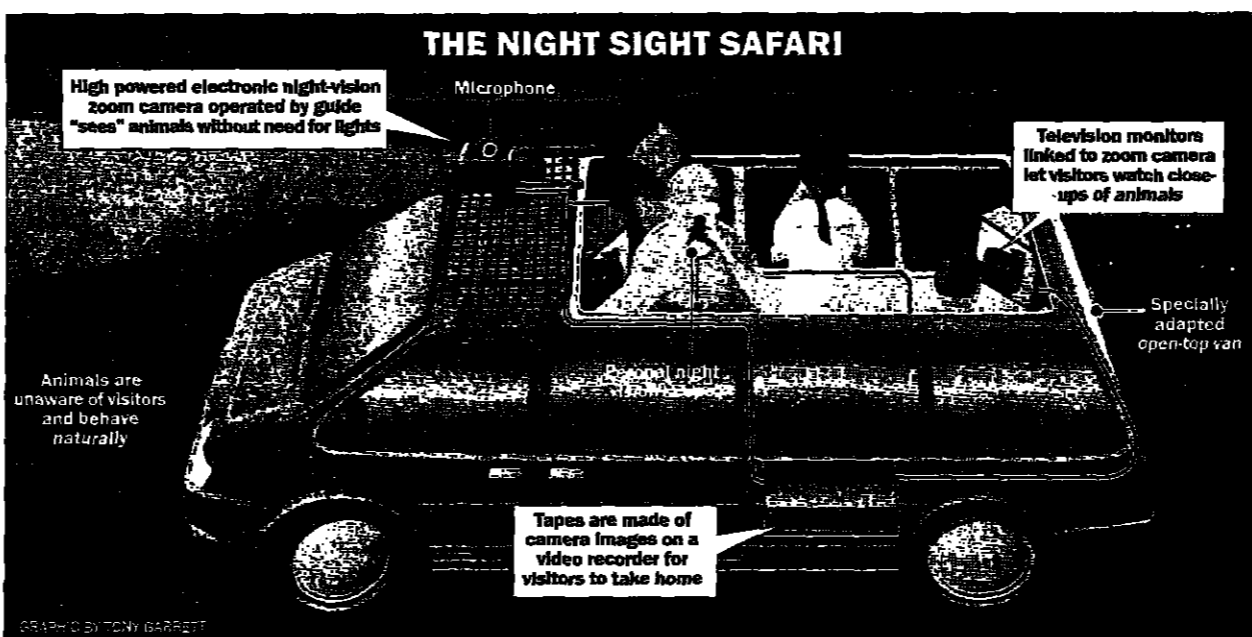
An excursion to a Masai village to meet the women was an enjoyable diversion from viewing animals at night, using goggles from a Land Rover kitted out with infra-red gadgets, below



constellations in the wide plains skies and listened to the sounds of the bush. And thought to myself: this is more compelling than watching fuzzy animals.

At \$100 (£60) per safari, Night Sight was a touch disappointing. It never quite lived up to its promise, and I found I was straining my eyes without ever being able to focus properly.

A first-time visitor, I was taken with Kenya. I had never fancied a safari - chugging around in a Land Rover waiting for lions to turn up seemed too much like fishing without the catch.



sort of thing that makes Africa hands waxy lyrical about it "gazing under your skin". There was a kick to being able to see horizons as far as 40 miles away, as one can during a fine day on the Masai Mara.

house, and newly discovered area of Cleopatra finds. Return to the Mena House in the evening by express train and fly on Saturday morning from Cairo to London Heathrow with British Airways.

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES 1998: Friday - see website for full details July 17, 24, 31 - £295.00 August 7, 14, 21, 28 - £295.00 September 4, 11, 18, 25 - £295.00 October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - £295.00 Single Supplement £195.00 Upper decks supplement £65.00

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David taught us how to do the bouncy Masai walk - readers of a certain generation may remember Spotty Dog in the Woodentops - and we turned while as he pointed out the various flora of the bush.

three days, then go to another lodge or relax on the coast," said Munene Ngohi, the affable hotel manager.

But, intriguingly, Munene had also told us of a burgeoning activity, which struck me as a possible complement to Night Sight. "Cultural safaris and special interest groups are growing," he said.

Whereas Night Sight was less than illuminating - I concede we may have had a bad run - the village excursion was an unexpected highlight. Then, as we motored back to the club, I realised that they were both part of a revitalising effort.

Kenya Fact File: Oliver Bennett travelled with Prestige Hotels and British Airways. Getting there: Abercrombie and Kent (0171-730 9600) offers a "Wings Over Kenya" safari that includes three nights at both Prestige's Mara Intrepids Club and Samburu Intrepids Club, and one night at the Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi.

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Vertical text on the left margin: SHANNON EBS, AMERICAN BEST OFFER UNDER THE...

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TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD

Everybody wants to be Kate and Leo

YOU MIGHT think that the film Titanic would have been bad news for the cruise industry. Not a bit of it. In fact, as I discovered when I boarded P&O's cruise liner, Oriana, last Friday for a weekend break, it is impossible to avoid references to the blockbuster.

TRIP WIRES



by Cath Urquhart TRAVEL EDITOR

I FEEL sorry for anyone in India who is suffering in the current heatwave, with temperatures in the high 40s centigrade. As seems to happen most years in Delhi, angry mobs have been attacking electricity substations to protest at the power cuts that always accompany the heatwave.

THE timeshare industry continues to inch its way towards respectability. From Monday, Thomas Cook will sell timeshare holidays through its network of travel agents.

TRAVELLERS' TIP

ALWAYS take a few small padlocks with you. Not only can they be used to lock the zips of luggage (detering opportunistic thieves), they can also be handy for locking bags to luggage racks on trains (allowing you to fall asleep with peace of mind).

Send your suggestion, in no more than 75 words, on a postcard to: Travellers' Tip, The Times Travel Desk, 11, Buntings Street, London E1 6JN.

Kenya holiday prices tumble

Now is the time to go, say Oliver Bennett and Jeannette Hyde

Bargain hunters will find Kenya one of the best deals around this summer as tour operators offer ridiculously low prices to entice tourists back.

Freak weather conditions, social unrest, a tourist murder in February at the Aberdare Country Club, anti-malaria drug scares and hiked visa fees have all hit the headlines - and led to a drop in travel to Kenya over the past year.

But operators believe this summer is their opportunity to show travellers that the worst is over and that now is a good time to visit.

Hayes and Jarvis planning executive Stephen Hodgson said: "The weather is improving and there are huge savings to be made. Our accommodation prices in Mombasa have been heavily reduced."

Kenya was badly affected by El Niño. The rainy season - which normally runs from mid-April to late May - started last December and has only just ended.

Hayes and Jarvis is offering a week's all-inclusive holiday in Mombasa for £299, leaving tomorrow, the kind of price you would normally pay for a European holiday.

Kuoni Travel has seven-night B&B breaks in Mombasa, including flights, for £499 next month. Somak Holidays, one of the biggest operators to Kenya, is offering seven nights half-board from £399 in June including flights on Kenya Airways.

"We have seen passenger figures growing dramatically to Dubai and the UAE. People see it as an adventure destination coupled with a beach holiday," he said.

The company uses hotels and apartments mainly in Dubai, with desert options offered alongside golf and fishing. All-day desert safari drives, sand skiing, camel riding, dinner in the dunes and swimming in mountain pools in the Ras Al Khaimah region are all included. Week-long holidays start at £399.

anxious - as are the tour operators - to get people back to Kenya. During the high season from July to October there will be even better prices." Nigel Vere-Nicol, managing director of tour operator On Safari, said: "The government is trying to repair the roads and there have been some unbelievable special offers. Kenya is one of the few African destinations where you can combine a safari with a beach holiday."

I have just come back from Miami Beach where there were two killings and a rape, but I saw nothing in the papers here. Yet when anything happens in Kenya it is everywhere. The press coverage from Nairobi is far more intense."

Toby Oliver, spokesman for Prestige Hotels, which runs safari and beach properties in Kenya, said: "The political unrest is over and the violence associated with the election before Christmas is finished. This is the time to go back to Kenya."

Dogged by reports of violence and political corruption, Kenya has seen a massive drop in tourists over the past few years. Last year about 700,000 visitors went to Kenya - more than 100,000 less than in 1991.

Lariam, the controversial anti-malarial drug prescribed for some parts of Kenya, is also believed to have put some people off travel, as well as the £35 visa fee introduced for British nationals late last year.



Happy times on a Mombasa beach last year. But tourists have been staying away from Kenya recently

Let's all ski down a sand dune

RIDING across the desert or skiing down sand dunes are featured in a Middle East holiday brochure aimed at Britons, writes Steve Keenan.

The United Arab Emirates and Oman are normally regarded as shopping stop-over destinations en route to the Far East. But desert holidays have grown in popularity, with Britons enjoying a mix of dunes and deckchairs, according to Hasan Scarr, sales manager of Dnata Travel (0171-244 5840).

"We have seen passenger figures growing dramatically to Dubai and the UAE. People see it as an adventure destination coupled with a beach holiday," he said.

Table with columns for destination and price. Includes London - Athens, Birmingham - Berlin, London - Edinburgh, London - Los Angeles, London - Malaga, London - Milan, Edinburgh - Munich, London - Rome, London - Zurich, London - Tokyo.

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STAY FREE at The Manor Arms (01460 72901), North Perrott, Somerset. Until the end of July, you can stay for a minimum of two nights on a half-board basis, and only pay the price of the gourmet three-course dinner - £25 per person per night.

ERNEST Hemingway went to extremes to discourage visitors to his home in Key West, Florida, but now you can visit it without incurring his legendary wrath.

DESTINATION Far East (0171-336 7788) is offering a nine-day tour of Vietnam. The Compact Vietnam tour includes visits to Saigon, the Perfume River and Hanoi.

TROPICAL Places (01342 825123) has reduced many of its prices until the end of June. Fourteen nights' all-inclusive at La Source in Grenada is reduced to £1,449 per person.

The sun never sets on Fred Olsen's (01473 292222) Black Watch cruise. Stopping off at Amsterdam, Spitsbergen and visiting Tromsø, cultural capital of the Arctic and home to the Ice Cathedral, the 15-day trip starts at £2,160 per person.

includes visits to Saigon, the Perfume River and Hanoi. Including B&B, return flights, transfers and taxes, the tour starts at £1,089 per person. Departs daily from Heathrow or Manchester.

WALK yourself fit with Waymark Holidays' (01753 516477) walking trip in Madeira. Departing from Gatwick on June 13, ten days half-board, including three days in Funchal, starts at £650 per person.

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